MORAY & NAIRN 1978

Where to go & what to see

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July and August are obviously the busiest months for holidays, in the Highlands as elsewhere. If you can so arrange, there is much to be said for a holiday outwith the peak period. The choice of accommodation is wider and often less expensive, and the roads and restaurants less crowded. In early summer the trees and countryside are at their freshest, and the days are long. These are often the driest months, with maximum hours of sunshine. September brings the mellowness of the harvest scene, and the blaze of autumn colours.

But no matter when you come we will do our best to make your visit enjoyable and memorable.

WELCOME TO MORAY

By Captain Iain Tennant (Lord Lieutenant of Moray)

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome once more all who come to Moray for their holiday and also those whose business takes them to this area for a time.

This splendid magazine must be of great assistance to our visitors, and I congratulate The Northern Times Limited on producing such an excellent guide to the unlimited variety of holiday pursuits which can be enjoyed here.

Moray District lies in an area of unspoilt wooded countryside, is bounded on the South by the impressive Scottish Highlands and in the North is edged by lovely sandy beaches, and enjoys an excellent climate. There are forest walks, parks, gardens and castles to be explored; there is a Benedictine Abbey; there are picnic sites in which to relax amid beautiful scenery. The towns are very good shopping centres and also contain several interesting places well worth a visit — such as the ruins of the cathedral in Elgin.

Those who like to indulge in their favourite sport will find many facilities here — there are fine golf courses and good fishing. There are swimming pools and most parks have facilities for tennis, putting and bowls, together with a children's play area.

Your holiday in Moray can be as relaxing or as energetic as you care to make it — we, who live here, hope it will be a happy one and that you will look forward to returning again and again.

WELCOME TO NAIRN

By The Earl of Leven and Melville (Lord Lieutenant of Nairn)

Nairnshire is not quite the smallest county in Scotland (there are three smaller in area) but, with 104,251 acres, it is by no means large. It is noted for the mildness and dryness of its climate, a statement which might be taken as gross exaggeration by some southerners who believe that the area forms part of the frozen north. Nevertheless, it is quite true and, although severe winter weather does affect the landward area of the county at times, the coastal belt does not often have snow lying for long and does not have a high rainfall in the summer months.

The town of Nairn has a population of about 5,000. It has two very fine golf courses and another small course, sandy beaches, good hotels and a large caravan site near the harbour. Visitors wanting to go inland away from the coast will find an area of woodlands and small farms giving way to moorland, with hills rising to 2013 feet at the highest point.

There is no magnificent mountain scenery in the county nor is there anything to match the impressive beauty of the western shores of Scotland. But if the traveller takes the trouble to find his way to the valley of the Findhorn he will find beauty of a kind that is hard to beat.

Bird watchers and naturalists will find plenty to occupy them in the county. Roe deer abound and the noble capercaillie, although never in large numbers, may be seen in the woods, blackgame on the low moors and occasionally an osprey is to be seen on the river.

Visitors may not want to spend their whole holiday in the county but they would be well advised to stop for a few days on their way past.

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COVER — A view of Cawdor Castle and part of the gardens. This legendary building, near Nairn, is now open to the public during the season.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are indebted to the following for the loan of photographs appearing in this magazine — Duncan McTavish, Auldearn; John Edelsten, Portsoy, and Geoffrey N. Wright, Leyburn, North Yorkshire. We are also indebted to those who wrote articles, and to the Tourist Organisations at Elgin and Inverness for information in regard to their own districts.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

We wonder if our readers are satisfied with the content and make-up of our Tourist Guides for the North of Scotland. If not, please write and tell us or, better still, let us have a contribution for them, with photographs, if possible.

All advertisements are accepted on the express condition that they in no way contravene the provisions of the Trades Descriptions Act, 1968.

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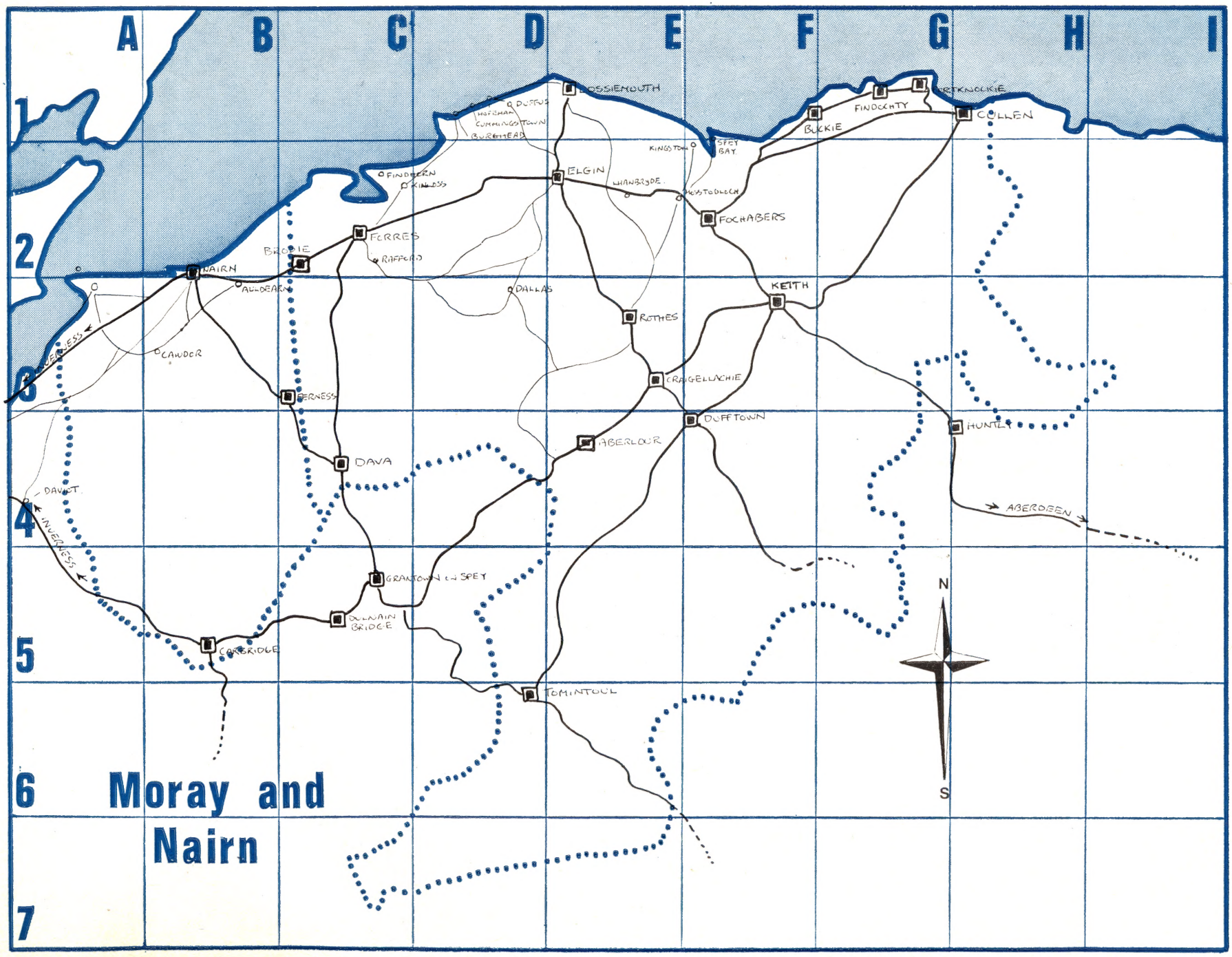
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Moray and Nairn

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GAZETTEER (By Districts)

MORAY

ABERLOUR (Map Ref. E4) : Picturesque burgh pleasantly situated on the River Spey. Some 14 miles south of Elgin and 5 miles from Rothes. Whisky town and good salmon and trout fishing centre. Tennis courts. Several fine hotels and guest houses. Shops, restaurant and most services, including caravan site.

ADVIE (Map Ref. D5) : Hamlet just off the A95, six miles east of Grantown-on-Spey where the Bridge of Advie crosses the River Spey. Guest houses. P.O.

ALVES (Map Ref. D2) : Small village, formerly known as Crook of Alves, on the A96 a few miles west of Elgin. Public house and guest houses in village. Nearby, at North Alves, is a pleasant, well-run caravan park, one of the few in the country to gain a Civic Trust award.

ARCHIESTOWN (Map Ref. E3) : A fair-sized planned village of mid-18th century, standing 700ft. above sea level and on the B9102 Rothes-Grantown road. Finalist in the "Britain in Bloom" Competition in 1975. Only two miles from the River Spey, so there is good angling here. Hotel, guest houses. P.O.

BIRNIE (Map Ref. E2) : Civil parish with distillery hamlet of Thomshill, and with a long history. The present parish church dates from 1140 and is one of the oldest churches in Scotland in continuous use. On Elgin-Rothes road and only a few miles from Elgin.

BRODIE (Map Ref. C2) : Small community on the A96 west of Forres and centred on Brodie Castle, which has been in the hands of the Brodie family since at least 1160. Notable Pictish stone, known as the Rodney Stone, stands near the estate gates. Hotel, restaurant, caravan park and craft shop, also picnic site and woodland walk.

BUCKIE (Map Ref. G1) : Fair-sized town with a population of 7500 and one of the largest burghs in the new Moray District. Eight miles from Fochabers and seven from Cullen. Important white fishing port with one of the largest and most modern harbours on the Moray Firth coast. Lovely stretches of beach in sheltered coves between the town and Findochty. Golf courses at nearby Strathlene and Buckpool. Tennis courts and bowling green. Good shopping centre. Several hotels, guest houses and all services, including caravan site.

BURGHEAD (Map Ref. D1) : Small town on rocky peninsula in Moray Firth to east of Burghead Bay. Interesting Pictish or Roman well-chamber cut out of solid rock near Burghead Point. Fascinating old harbour with popular boat centre. Hotels, guest houses and P.O.

CRAIGELLACHIE (Map Ref. E3) : Attractive distillery village situated 13 miles south-east of Elgin where the River Fiddich joins the Spey. Fine angling centre. Tennis courts. Three hotels and a few guest houses. P.O.

CROMDALE (Map Ref. D5) : Small village on the A95, east of Grantown-on-Spey, and now in the Badenoch and Strathspey District. The parish church, dating from 1809, stands half-a-mile away on the banks of the Spey. Outdoor centre in village. Good fishing area. Hotel. P.O.

CULLEN (Map Ref. H1) : Picturesque old fishing town on Moray Firth about 21 miles north-east of Elgin. Popular holiday resort with splendid mixture of sandy beaches and rocky shore. Sea-fishing and river and loch angling in area. Other sports include tennis, bowls, boating and golf (18 holes). Cullen House, home of the Earls of Seafield, is, unfortunately, not now open to the public, while nearby Findlater Castle, the old residence of the Seafield family, is another interesting antiquity. Several hotels and guest houses and a caravan site. Good shopping facilities and cafes. P.O. Tourist Information office.

DALLAS (Map Ref. D3) : Tidy village in the Lossie valley some ten miles south-west of Elgin. Parish church dates from 1793 and lies about half-a-mile from village at Bridge of Lossie. In the churchyard is the old Dallas Cross. Fishing available. Hotel, guest houses and P.O.

DUFFTOWN (Map Ref. F4) : Nerve centre of the whisky industry, being surrounded by seven distilleries. Lovely walks and fine fishing in vicinity. Mortlach Parish Church, Balvenie Castle and Auchindoun Castle are well-known historic landmarks in the area. Nine-hole golf course, tennis courts and bowling green. Hotel. Restaurants and Guest Houses. Usual shops and P.O.

DUFFUS (Map Ref. D1) : Small village four miles north of Elgin with a pleasant parish church built about 1868. Duffus Castle, south of village, was one of the finest Motte and Bailey castles in Scotland, and is open to public at all reasonable times.

ELGIN (Map Ref. E2) : Ancient city and county town of Moray and prosperous farming centre on the A96 Aberdeen-Inverness trunk road. Excellent selection of shops, accommodation, restaurants and entertainments. Once the seat of the Bishops of Moray, the ancient Cathedral, originally built in 1224 and now partly ruined, dominates the Cooper Park, at the eastern end of the town. Fine 18-hole golf course, with tennis, bowls and other sporting activities. Hotels, Guest Houses and all services, including bus and rail stations. Tourist information centre, also fine museum.

FINDHORN (Map Ref. C2) : Attractive village on the eastern shore of Findhorn Bay where it joins the Moray Firth. About seven miles from Forres. With its excellent beaches, caravan sites and sheltered moorings, this is a popular holiday resort and amenities are now being much improved. Several 18th-century buildings among the clusters of cottages. Well-known yachting and boating centre. Nearby is the Findhorn Foundation, a Quasi-Religious community, attracting visitors from all over the world. Hotels, guest houses, restaurant and P.O.

FINDOCHTY (Map Ref. G1) : Small sea-fishing town about three miles from Buckie, with picturesque harbour and pier. Bowling green in town and golf course at nearby Strathlene. Interesting coves and caves along the seafront. Caravan site and guest houses. Shops and P.O.

FOCHABERS (Map Ref. F2) : Planned town on the A96, eight miles east of Elgin, with tree-lined central square. On south side of square stands Bellie Parish Church, built in 1798 and flanked by two Georgian houses built about 1800. Approach from west by modern bridge over the River Spey, with earlier three-arched structure alongside. Popular fishing centre and golf at nearby Spey Bay. Good shopping and other facilities. Hotels, guest houses, restaurant and caravan site with swimming pool. Tourist information centre.

FORRES (Map Ref. C2) : A pleasant town and Royal Burgh of great antiquity on the main A96 Elgin-Inverness road. Very good shopping centre and, off the attractive High Street, are many closes with terraces of 18th-century cottages. At the east end of the town is a walk leading to Nelson's Tower on Cluny Hill, and nearby is a fine 18-hole golf course. Off the B9011, at its junction with the A96 at the east end of the town, is the famous Sueno's Stone, a Pictish monument adorned with carved figures. Delightful park with children's swings and sunken garden, etc. Sporting facilities include fishing,

tennis and bowls. Hotels, guest houses, restaurants and all services, including railway station. Tourist information office.

GARMOUTH (Map Ref. F2) : Scattered village a few miles north of Mosstodloch and originally on the banks of the River Spey. Plaque on Brae House wall commemorates the landing of Charles II after his exile. Nine-hole golf course. The Maggie Fair takes place here on last Saturday in June. Hotel, guest houses. P.O.

GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY (Map Ref. C5) : Attractive town and established holiday resort on the banks of River Spey and now in Badenoch and Strathspey District. A beautifully planned town, founded in 1766, with a grassy, tree-lined square. Some fine granite buildings face the square and several walks are to be found in the wooded approaches to the river. Fishing, golf, tennis and bowls enthusiasts are all catered for and, during the winter months, ski-ing is available on the nearby Cairngorms. Hotels, guest houses, shops and most services are plentiful and there is a caravan site nearby. Tourist information centre in square.

HOPEMAN (Map Ref. D1) : Planned village sloping down to harbour and sea. Caves at Covesea can be approached from here. On Moray Firth only few miles from Burghead and Duffus. Fine beaches with boating facilities, also nine-hole golf course. Hotels, guest houses and P.O.

KEITH (Map Ref. F3) : Busy town with a population of over 4000, on the main road and railway line between Inverness and Aberdeen, and seven miles from Fochabers. Excellent touring and shopping centre. Sporting facilities include golf, putting, tennis, bowls and a swimming pool at the local Grammar School. Strathisla whisky distillery nearby also tweed mills. Hotels, guest houses and all services, including tourist information office and caravan site.

KINGSTON (Map Ref. F2) : Hamlet of scattered cottages near the mouth of River Spey, only a mile or two from Garmouth and facing north towards the Moray Firth across a shingle beach. A few guest houses in area.

KINLOSS (Map Ref. C2) : Small village on B9011, a few miles north-east of Forres, now dominated by R.A.F. base. Guest houses, restaurant, shops and P.O.

LHANBRYDE (Map Ref. E2) : Village on main A96 four miles east of Elgin. Hotels, guest houses, shops, filling station, tea room, P.O., etc.

LOSSIEMOUTH (Map Ref. E1) : Renowned fishing port and seaside resort five miles north of Elgin. Birthplace of famous Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald. Two main parts to the town — the older Seatown along the River Lossie and shore, and the later Victorian town on the hill. Two lovely sandy beaches and a championship golf course, while bowls and tennis are also available. Plenty of hotels and guest houses and there is also a large caravan park a mile to the west. Usual shops and most services.

MOSSTODLOCH (Map Ref. F2) : Scattered community along main A96 road, one mile west of Fochabers. Also short distance from River Spey where grand fishing is available.

PLUSCARDEN (Map Ref. D2) : District in the Vale of St Andrews, four miles west of Elgin, and renowned for its Abbey (formerly Priory). Originally established in 1230 and re-established in 1943, this ancient building is being lovingly restored by the Benedictine Monks — well worth a visit! Picnic area nearby.

PORTGORDON (Map Ref. F1) : Small town about two miles west of Buckie. Large trading port at one time but now the harbour is very quiet and peaceful. At least two hotels and a few guest houses. Some shops, including crafts workshop and P.O.

PORTKNOCKIE (Map Ref. G1) : Fascinating little town on the Moray Firth a few miles east of Findochty. Good harbour and interesting caves and rock formations on the waterfront. Tennis, bowls, putting, paddling pool and sea fishing. Shops and P.O.

RANDOLPH'S LEAP (Map Ref. C2) : Legendary beauty spot, off the B9007, where the River Findhorn rushes through a rocky gorge. Within a short distance of Forres.

ROSEISLE (Map Ref. D2) : Wooded area north of A96 and sweeping down to Moray Firth. Forestry Commission picnic area with car park. Within easy reach of Forres and Elgin.

ROTHES (Map Ref. E3) : Small town, ten miles south-east of Elgin, famed for its whisky distilleries. The remains of Leslie's Rothes Castle overlook the main street. Hotels, guest houses, restaurant and shops, including craft shop and P.O.

SANDEND (Map Ref. H1) : Quaint old village with ancient harbour, only a few miles east of Cullen and on the new Moray/Banff border. Majestic houses in the area, also a caravan site.

TOMINTOUL (Map Ref. D6) : The highest village in the Highlands (1200ft. above sea level) and halfway between Braemar and Inverness on the A939. In the heart of the whisky distillery country. Fine salmon and trout fishing, also tennis courts. Hotels, guest houses, restaurants and shops, including Post Office and petrol station, also caravan park. Elgin, 36 miles; Grantown-on-Spey, 14.

URQUHART (Map Ref. E2) : Neat, small village on a slight ridge off the main A96 road some five miles east of Elgin and near Lhanbryde. Half-a-mile to the north-east are the remains of a standing stone circle.

NAIRN

AULDEARN (Map Ref. B3) : Large village on the A96 a few miles east of Nairn. Site of Battle of Auldearn in 1645 when Montrose defeated a Covenanting force. Off the main road is the Boath Doocot, a 17th century circular building in the care of the National Trust for Scotland. Hotels, guest houses, a few shops and P.O. New caravan site.

CAWDOR (Map Ref. B3) : Attractive village scattered around a green with war memorial. A 17th century T-shaped church nestles among the trees and a short distance from the village is the magnificent Cawdor Castle, which retains its dry moat and drawbridge entrance. The castle is now open to the public and should be well worth a visit. Few hotels and guest houses in the area. The River Nairn flows near the village and so there is some fine fishing here.

FERNESS (Map Ref. C3) : Scattered village on the A939 about ten miles south-east of Nairn. Nearby is the Ardclach Bell Tower, a 17th century detached church tower. The Earl of Leven and Melville, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, has his home here. Good fishing in the area as the River Findhorn flows nearby and there are also lochs in the vicinity. Few guest houses.

NAIRN (Map Ref. B2) : Very popular holiday resort on the Moray Firth, with a wealth of attractions for visitors. Two sandy beaches, three fine golf courses (one is a championship course), tennis, bowls, boating and heated swimming pool are some of the sporting amenities here. The chief town of Nairn District, with a long history going back to the 12th century, it has little of its past evident today as most of the buildings date from the Victorian era. Good shopping centre and several restaurants. Wide selection of accommodation with many excellent hotels, guest houses and three large caravan sites. All services, including bus and rail stations. Tourist information centre.

BIRDS, ANIMALS AND PLANTS IN WONDERFUL VARIETY OF HABITATS

by John Edelsten

The Districts of Moray and Nairn have been long renowned for their wealth of wildlife, and there are a number of holiday centres from which visitors can explore the surrounding countryside.

Cullen

Logie Head stands at the eastern limits of Moray District; it can easily be picked out from a distance by its sheer rock face and the white trig point perched on the top. A coastal path runs east from Cullen to Logie Head, a delight in early spring when the cliffs are covered with primroses. On Logie Head there is a colony of fulmars with a few herring gulls and a pair of kestrels. It is worth following the path eastwards past Logie Head to the unspoilt shell-sand beach of Sunnyside, where, along the tideline, lie heaps of shells cast up by the sea. This part of the shore is the 'Mecca' of the shellcraft devotee, one or two of whom can usually be seen on their knees sorting out the cowries from the limpets, winkles, top shells and other common species. At low tide the rock pools contain a great variety of marine life. Provided that you stand still you can watch the hermit crabs foraging for food, and turning over rocks will reveal many other species, including starfish and the brightly coloured squat lobster. Please take care to replace the boulders in their original position and so avoid damaging the marine habitat.

The sand dunes are largely consolidated by marram and other grasses and support a rich flora. In spring, colonies of meadow saxifrage and dog violet carpet the base of the cliff; later in the year, rock rose, burnet rose and sea pink put on a colourful display. For the sake of variety the return to Cullen can be made up the path past old Logie House and through the Crannoch Woods. Typical woodland birds such as sparrowhawk, redpoll, longtailed tit and woodcock breed in the woods. The best time to visit the woods is in late summer when the heather is in bloom. Good varieties of fungi are to be found, including chanterelle and some edible species of boletus. There is also a profusion of brambles in the quarry and in the hedges along the old road.

Fochabers

Situated on the right bank of the Spey, Fochabers is an ideal centre for exploring the lower reaches of the river, and riverside paths extend north and south from the town. The path downstream leads through young conifer plantations and past alder carr until one comes to the old railway bridge across the river. Here, Moray District Council are constructing a footpath over the bridge linking up with walks on either side of the river. From a vantage point on the bridge one can watch the shingle islands of the lower Spey with their teeming bird life. Colonies of common gulls and arctic terns nest right to the waters edge and are frequently washed out by sudden spates. Waders such as oystercatchers, common sandpipers and ringed plovers also nest in small numbers; mallard and red-breasted mergansers are also fairly common. There is a large nest of a dipper underneath the bridge and the birds can be watched flying up to the nest with food for their young.

In spite of the shifting sand and gravel, flowers grow in profusion on the Spey islands. The yellow monkey flower and the white mayweed are the most conspicuous. One may also find alpine plants whose seeds have been washed down from the upper reaches of the Spey tributaries, while on the river bank the giant hogweed grows to a height of over eight feet. This plant should be treated with caution as the juices from the cut stem can cause severe blistering. Another tall plant, the Himalayan balsam, grows in masses on the east bank of the river.

At Speymouth the river broadens out to form a wide lagoon and then funnels out to sea between the two shingle spits which reach out from Kingston, on the west bank, and the Tugnet, on the east. A flock of non-breeding mute swans are to be found in the lagoon throughout the year and these are joined in the winter by a few whooper swans, visitors from Iceland. Shelduck breed in the sandhills southwest of Kingston and bring their newly-hatched broods

A striking 'shot' of a sparrowhawk and its young. These birds, although not very common, may be seen in some areas of Moray.

to the safety of the lagoon. The shingle spits on either side of the estuary are good vantage points from which to observe the spectacle of bird migration — in early April large flocks of long-tailed ducks assemble in the bay prior to flying north to their haunts in Iceland. The first sandwich terns of the year are often seen on passage offshore and the first wheatears can be seen feeding on the shore. In the autumn, flocks of snow buntings arrive from the north and occasionally one can find a shore lark or a Lapland bunting.

Lossiemouth

From Kingston west to Lossiemouth the coastline consists mainly of shingle. The colony of lesser black-backed gulls which used to nest at Kingston has now largely dispersed as a result of increased human disturbance but a few scattered pairs still nest along the shore. A few common terns also nest in the shingle, but the area of lowland heath near the rifle range is of more interest, with nesting redshank, lapwing and oystercatcher. At Lossiemouth, the river broadens out and these tidal reaches provide rich feeding for migrating waders in the late summer and autumn. Greenshank are regular visitors and black-tailed godwit are occasionally seen, while small numbers of brent geese visit the estuary later in the year.

Loch Spynie is the most important wildfowl refuge in the area. There is a wintering flock of over 1000 grey-lag geese and these are occasionally joined by brent and barnacle geese — a bean goose was recently shot near the loch. Wintering ducks include wigeon, pochard and a few gadwall as well as the usual mallard and tufted duck, and a few whooper swans may join the resident flocks of mute swans. Both the great crested and slavonian grebes have been seen here in the summer and the water rail can be heard calling from the reed beds. At the north end of the loch there is a large bed of the great reedmace, commonly misnamed bulrush as a result of its association with the picture of the infant Moses. And there are many other aquatic plants, including marestail, here.

Lossiemouth harbour and the high ground to the west provide good vantage points from which to watch the movements of migrating sea birds in the autumn and the flocks of sea duck which gather offshore in the winter. Three species of skua — great, pomarine and arctic — can be seen chasing migrating terns and gulls, robbing them of their food. Gannets appear regularly after the breeding season, sometimes in large numbers when there are shoals of sprats in the firth. Large flocks of scoter appear in the winter and these are accompanied by numbers of velvet scoters, while a winter flock of purple sandpipers roost around the harbour walls.

Forres

The equable climate and variety of habitat round Forres make it the centre of the richest area for wildlife in Moray and Nairn Districts. Culbin Forest is particularly important and the Forestry Commission have established a reception centre here to help visitors understand the ecology of the area. The extensive dunes have been planted with conifers, and flowering plants associated with pine woods are to be found in the forest. These include the three orchids — lesser twayblade, creeping lady's tresses and the coralroot orchid — and the small white flower, chickweed wintergreen, which is neither a chickweed nor a wintergreen, is also fairly common. The capercaillie has become well established, and other interesting woodland birds include the crested tit and the crossbill. The red squirrel is common and there is also a badger sett in the area.

North of the shore at Culbin is a long shingle spit extending westwards almost to Nairn. Although the colonies of breeding sea birds have greatly declined in recent years, there are still numbers of great black-backed gulls and common and arctic terns. It is hoped that, once a reserve is established in this area, some of the birds such as sandwich and little terns will return. The shingle spit is separated from the shore by an area of salt marsh and tidal mud flats. The marsh contains some interesting plants, including sea aster and the small pink centaury, while the mud flats attract large numbers of wading birds during autumn and winter. Large flocks of bar-tailed godwit are a feature and there are smaller numbers of grey plover, curlew and oystercatcher, with the occasional little stint and curlew sandpiper.

The mud flats of Findhorn Bay, to the east, also provide good feeding to visiting waders — thousands of birds roost on the salt marshes at the south of the bay at high tide and as the tide recedes they spread out over the mud. Redshank are especially common and there are several greenshank and perhaps a spotted redshank. Large numbers of lapwings and snipe gather in the saltings and herons stalk along the creeks hunting for small fish. To the east of Findhorn village, the extension of the caravan site and the building of chalets have brought increasing pressures on birds, especially the small colony of little terns which used to breed in the dunes. There is still considerable botanical interest left, including typical coastal species such as storksbill and dovesfoot cranesbill.

Keith

Although not famed as a holiday resort, Keith is a good centre for exploring the inland woods and glens. A well maintained footpath leads from the Huntly road to the Falls of Tarnish, a limestone site rich in mosses and liverworts — a dipper can be seen flying to its nest behind the waterfall. Another rewarding walk is along the Drum road to Mill Wood, Ardrone. Following the track of the old mineral railway, one walks up the burn, through the birch woods until one reaches the disused lime kiln. The trees in the upper section of the wood include hazel and blackthorn and there is a varied ground flora including wood speedwell and the dainty moschatel with its five flower-heads at right angles to each other, forming a clock face.

The adventurous naturalist, equipped with wellington boots, should pay a visit to the Den of Pitlurg, between Keith and Huntly. This glacial melt water channel extends east-west for over a mile and at this point, forms the boundary between Moray and Gordon Districts. The floor of the valley is extremely wet and is covered with head-high tussock sedge and a profusion of meadow-sweet. The steep sides of the valley are clad with a variety of broad-leaved trees, prominent among which are numbers of bird cherry, which, in the spring, bear masses of sweet-scented blossom. At this time, too, the woods are alive with small birds, while sedge warblers and whitethroats scold from the sallow bushes growing on the valley floor.

Loch Park, on the road from Keith to Dufftown, is also well worth visiting. The reed beds provide shelter for breeding water-fowl such as moorhens, coots and dabchicks, as well as mallard and tufted duck. In the autumn, migrating wildfowl from the north congregate on the loch but they do not normally stay for the winter as the loch is very shallow and easily freezes over completely. The loch is also a regular haunt of the otter, and roe deer are common in the surrounding woodlands.

Tomintoul

Conveniently situated amidst the hills and glens of south Moray, Tomintoul has developed into a thriving tourist resort, but the upper reaches of Glenlivet are seldom visited and are quite unspoilt. There is an extensive birch wood above Tombae with a good variety of breeding birds including cole tit, tree pipit and buzzard. From the Braes of Glenlivet distillery a track leads south over the Ladder Hills, and on the way up one passes the site of the original Glenlivet distillery, the ruins of which can still be discerned. A lush bed of nettles has grown up where the pot ale used to be discharged into the burn and a colony of tall foxgloves line the bank upstream.

There is also an interesting birch wood near the top of the Lecht road, at an altitude of 1500 feet, with a car park nearby. Woodcock can be found in the woods and moorland birds such as ring ouzel in the vicinity. The hills at the top of the Lecht pass are being developed for ski-ing, and winter visitors to the hills should watch out for mountain hares, which are very conspicuous in their white winter coats whenever they run across a patch of bare heather. Red deer tend to move off the hill tops in snowy weather — it is now common practice to feed them artificially during the winter.

The woods bordering the river Avon below Tomintoul are well worth visiting, particularly in the neighbourhood of the lime quarry. Some locally scarce plants such as cowslip grow on the crags here and goosanders and common sandpipers breed along the river banks. Farther south, the Cromdale hills are easily climbed and give good views of the Spey valley, and dunlin and golden plover breed on these hilltops.

The Cairngorm mountains mark the southern boundary of Moray District and are within easy reach of Tomintoul. A short drive to Aviemore and an exhilarating trip up the chair-lift brings one nearly to the summit of Cairngorm — from here the energetic can walk across the central plateau to Ben Macdhui, the highest point in the District. In spring, the alpine landscape is enlivened by patches of moss campion and wild azalea, while one may catch glimpses of ptarmigan and dotterel, which frequent the high tops in small numbers. Another strenuous walk is to follow the path down the left bank of Allt Coire Domhain to the Shelter Stone at the head of Loch Avon.

NATURE RAMBLES

If the visitor to the districts of Moray and Nairn wishes to fully appreciate the wild life and plant life of this beautiful area of the North-East of Scotland and to explore in depth the ever-changing scenery of the countryside as well as study the ancient history of the region, he should forsake his car or other transport and walk into the heart of the hills and forests.

Although much of the land in these districts is owned by private estates, the visiting nature-lover will find that, in most cases, he will be given permission to ramble through this glorious region, provided, of course, that he remembers to obey the 'Country Code' and that he does not interfere with fishing, shooting and farming. However, there are several walks and picnic areas—ancient monuments, too — which are open to the public and are, in fact, laid out for the benefit of the tourist by the local councils or the various nature commissions such as the Forestry Commission, Nature Conservancy Council, Scottish Wildlife Trust, National Trust for Scotland, etc. Some of the best and easiest found of these nature rambles and other features are given below.

BURGHEAD — The **Roseisle Picnic Site,** not far from Burghead, is a well-known and lovely picnic area with access to beach and seashore. It is reached from the B9089 about 3½ miles south of Burghead. From the picnic area there are several tracks through the woods in the vicinity, these providing nature trails of various lengths.

DUFFTOWN — Situated above the valleys of the River Fiddich and its tributary, the Dullan Water, the old town of Dufftown is particularly well known for its connections with the whisky trade. There are six malt distilleries in the vicinity of the town and several of these offer conducted tours round their plants — these are well worth a visit! The clock tower in the town's main square was built in 1847 and, from the car park in the square, the visitor can find a pleasant walk of four miles over farm roads and narrow paths which takes in most of the surrounding district. The start is made up Fife Street to Mortlach Distillery, founded in 1823, and on to Pittyvaich Distillery and along the ravine of Dullan Water. The path then leads, via a footbridge and past waterfalls to a good viewpoint. Then the route turns back towards Dufftown via Mortlach Church, originally built before the Reformation but renovated and enlarged at later dates. The walk can also take in the environs of the attractive Princess Royal Park before returning to the centre of Dufftown.

ELGIN — A lovely picnic area and woodland walks have been established at **Millbuies** by Moray District Council and can be reached from the A941 about four miles south of the ancient city of Elgin, a very popular touring centre. Four beautiful forest walks, with car park, picnic area and toilets, have been laid out by the Forestry Commission in conjunction with the local council roughly four miles south-west of Elgin, on the way to Pluscarden Abbey. This is a very popular and pleasant picnic spot and the **Monaughty Forest Walks** here are certainly well worth the effort!

The **River Lossie Walk** starts at Elgin Library, housed in Grant Lodge, in the Cooper Park. This 18th century building was the town house of the Seafields of Cullen and the Cooper Park was gifted to Elgin by the late Sir George Cooper. Take the path leading from the library along past the boating pond to Lossie Green. From here, cross North Street and go along the banks of the River Lossie, which takes one to a wooden bridge crossing the river. On crossing the bridge take the path on the left which continues along the river bank and shortly one comes to Bow Bridge, the first stone bridge over the Lossie and dating from the 1630's. Cross the bridge and carry on along Old Mill Road to the round-about, where one turns left along the High Street.

FINDHORN — On the north-east side of Findhorn Bay and not far from Forres there is an excellent and popular picinc site with access to beach and seashore. Again, this is another beauty spot which is administered by the District Council, and provides views of the marvellous Forestry Commission plantations on the Culbin Sands.

FOCHABERS — Near the pleasant holiday resort and ancient town of Fochabers the Forestry Commission have established the **Speymouth Forest Walks,** which include picnic areas and car parks. Very popular with all visitors to the area, these walks are also well patronised by local residents. The first of these winding walks, with grand views of Speyside and the Moray coast, is situated about a mile east of Fochabers on the A98. The **Allt Dearg** river walk is 1½ miles due south of Fochabers and provides excellent views of the River Spey and unique 'earth pillars'.

FORRES — The **Brodie Picnic Site,** with a car park at the nearby craft shop and restaurant, is a pleasant picnic spot and woodland walk. It is situated near the hamlet of Brodie and about 3½ miles west of Forres on the main A9 road. In and around the charming and ancient town of Forres itself there are several lovely short rambles — Altyre Wood, Cluny Hill, Clovenside, Muiryshade and Springfield are some of the names for these walks — and all are popular with visitors to the area. The local tourist information centre can provide details of these walks.

GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY — Now in Badenoch and Strathspey District of Highland Region, the popular holiday centre of Grantown-on-Spey was for so long an integral part of Moray that it is well worth inclusion here. A walk through this lovely planned town, with its tree-lined square, is a pleasant stroll on its own, but there are also a few beautiful walks on the outskirts of the town, especially along the wooded banks of the River Spey. Details of these may be obtained from the tourist information centre in the main square.

NAIRN — The **Riverside Walk,** along the banks of the River Nairn at the picturesque and very popular holiday town of Nairn, is always a favourite walk for visitors to the area. The start of the walk is at the main A9 road bridge over the river at Nairn. A good footpath leads along the east bank (the farther side of the river from the town) and extends for about 1½ miles to a footbridge across the river. After crossing this bridge one can turn right along the other bank and either continue back to the starting point or branch off on several roads into the centre of the town. There are quite a few seats along this lovely walk, which is administered by the local District Council.

TOMINTOUL — The local District Council have established a lovely country walk and picnic area in this picturesque region. The two-mile walk starts only half-a-mile south of Tomintoul and the picnic area is about halfway along the route. The Drumin Picnic Site is another popular spot near Tomintoul and is situated on the B9136 about a mile from its junction wth the B9008 and near a rural craft centre. A third picnic spot in this area (the Wells of Lecht) is found about five miles from Tomintoul on the A939 to Deeside and there is a footpath from the picnic area to a disused ironstone mine. Of course, because of the height of Tomintoul and its surroundings there are marvellous views all around.

FABULOUS RIVERS, MARVELLOUS LOCHS, LOVELY SEA COAST

THE ever-popular holiday Districts of Moray and Nairn, although not tremendously large compared to some of the Highland counties, certainly cover a wide area which contains some of the finest fishing in Scotland. There are several excellent rivers, splendid lochs and a sea coast which is recognised as one of the most picturesque and having one of the lowest rainfalls in the North. In addition, these Districts can boast of a few fair-sized towns where tackle shops, information centres and accommodation of various kinds are all plentiful and good.

To start with sea fishing, there are tremendous possibilities for this popular pastime all along the Moray Firth coast from Nairn in the west to Cullen and Sandend in the east. All the old commercial fishing ports such as Nairn, Burghead, Hopeman, Lossiemouth, Portgordon, Buckie, Findochty, Portknockie and Cullen are famous for their picturesque harbours where sea fishing is great fun, either from the quaysides or from a boat. Many types of sea fish (too numerous to list here) can be caught from any of these centres and, of course, the towns themselves offer plenty of other attractions for all members of the family as well as supplying the sea fisherman with all the bait, tackle, etc., required for the sport.

The District of Moray, in particular, is also fortunate in possessing a few excellent angling lochs and these offer some grand sport at low cost. The largest and probably the finest of these lochs is Lochindorb, near the boundary with Nairn District and just off the road from Nairn and Forres to Grantown-on-Spey. This lovely loch, with its island and ruined castle, is stocked with brown trout from about six to eleven pounds and although fishing is allowed from the bank there are also boats for hire at reasonable rates. Permits to fish may be obtained at the loch-side or at Forres. Loch Blairs, about three miles from Forres, on a private estate, is another very good angling water with some rainbow trout as well as brown trout, while Loch Dallas, a little nearer Elgin, also offers grand brown trout fishing from bank or boat. Permits to fish both Loch Blairs and Loch Dallas are available in Forres and, again, costs for bank angling or hire of boats are relatively low for the quality of the sport offered. In addition to these three prime examples there are a few other small lochs in the district, particularly around Cullen, and permits for trout fishing can be purchased for most of these.

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Although sea fishing and trout angling on lochs are both fairly popular, there is no doubt that the majority of keen holiday anglers are really particularly dedicated to hooking the great salmon and, of course, one of the finest salmon rivers in Britain flows through Moray District. This is the River Spey, which flows from Inverness-shire north-east into the Moray Firth at Spey Bay — about 100 miles long, it is the second longest river in Scotland. Along with its several tributaries such as the Avon (40 miles long), the Spey offers tremendous scope for the visiting angler along many of its beautiful stretches or beats and it contains salmon, sea trout, brown trout and pike, so there is plenty of variety.

Grantown-on-Spey is one of the principal angling centres along the course of this magnificent river and advice, tackle and permits to fish the Spey, as well as the river Dulnain, can be obtained at the

several fishing-tackle shops in the town. Strictly speaking, Grantown-on-Spey is now in Badenoch and Strathspey District of Inverness-shire but is practically on the border of Moray District and is often still classed as being part of the latter. Certainly, this popular holiday town, with its first-class angling association, can offer weekly tickets on some fine beats of the Spey at very low cost. Tomintoul, not far from Grantown-on-Spey, is recognised as the centre for angling facilities on the River Avon and, as such, is a well-patronised holiday venue, although permits for this river can also be purchased at estate offices and hotels in the vicinity.

Back on the River Spey and travelling north-east down the river from Grantown-on-Spey there are many other excellent angling beats, most of which are privately owned. However, permission to fish in this beautiful part of the Spey Valley may be obtained from hotels and estate offices at such tourist spots as Craigellachie and Advie, although these fishings are usually quite expensive and exclusive. On the other hand, permits for a limited number of rods may be purchased at Aberlour at a fairly moderate charge. Aberlour, long renowned for its angling facilities on the Spey, is a quiet holiday centre with several comfortable hotels and, of course, like Craigellachie, Rothes and other villages here, it is set amongst the marvellous scenery of the Spey Valley.

Towards the mouth of the Spey there is some very fine fishing available near the lovely and popular holiday resort of Fochabers. Although the number of rods on the river here are limited, the local angling association do have some permits for sale at very reasonable cost and the holiday angler who manages to obtain one of these can count himself very fortunate indeed! Spey Bay, at the mouth of the river, is also a favourite water with the keen holiday fisherman and the playing and catching of the lovely sea trout in the estuary here can provide great enjoyment for many visitors as well as local people. Another popular venue with several holiday anglers is the busy market town of Keith, where permits can be purchased for fishing a few beats on the nearby River Islay, another very fine salmon and trout stream.

Not far behind the fabulous Spey in angling popularity as well as size is the River Findhorn, which rises in the Monadh Liath ('Grey Mountain') range of hills in Inverness-shire and flows for between 65 and 70 miles to the north-east to enter the Moray Firth at Findhorn Bay. Like the Spey, the major stretches of the Findhorn are privately owned and permits to fish on the best beats here are neither very cheap nor easily obtainable. However, although the brown trout fishing on this stream is generally regarded as only fair, the salmon angling is very good indeed and well worth the effort and cost of obtaining angling tickets for a day or even a week. Visitors resident in Forres or Rafford can obtain permits to fish the three-mile stretch of the Findhorn between these two centres at very reasonable charge but, naturally, these tickets are always in great demand. In addition to salmon, sea trout and finnock can be caught on this part of the river but Sunday angling is forbidden and certain other days and dates are also exempt. Day or weekly tickets are also available at Findhorn Bay, the renowned sailing and holiday resort at the mouth of the river, and fishing for sea trout and finnock here from shore or boat can provide exhilarating sport for all keen anglers.

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The River Lossie is probably the only fair-sized stream to flow wholly within Moray District and it, too, offers some excellent salmon, sea trout and brown trout angling. Many visitors to Lossiemouth and Elgin attempt to prove their skill with rod and line on the Lossie and advice, as well as flies, lures and other angling equipment, can be obtained at the fine tackle shops in both these popular holiday towns. Another beautiful river with very good runs of salmon and sea trout is the Nairn and tickets for beats on this water are available in the very well-patronised holiday resort of Nairn itself, the capital of the District. A feature of these three towns — Elgin, Lossiemouth and Nairn — is that there is, within each one, a marvellous selection of sports and recreations for all the family, and children, particularly, can have great fun on the beaches at Nairn or Lossiemouth or at the Cooper Park at Elgin while father is enjoying his angling on the appropriate river.

All in all, Moray and Nairn Districts offer almost every variety of fishing throughout the season and the holiday angler must surely enjoy his sport amidst the friendly atmosphere of the region. Accommodation is plentiful and good at all the main centres in the area, varying from first-class hotels, fine guest houses and large luxury caravan parks to small camp sites and clean croft-houses, and there is no doubt that a very enjoyable holiday can be spent here in such lovely surroundings by all fishermen — and others!

The North of Scotland is famous for the hospitality of the people and you will find a warm welcome at the Hotels and Guest Houses mentioned here. To assist you in planning your itinerary, we have included Map References which refer to the map at the front of the magazine.

Map Ref. : C5

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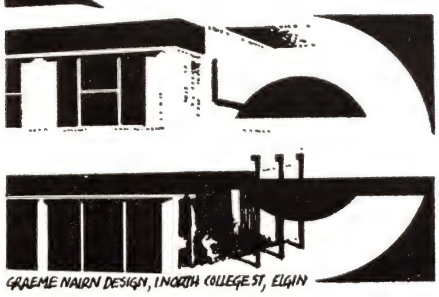

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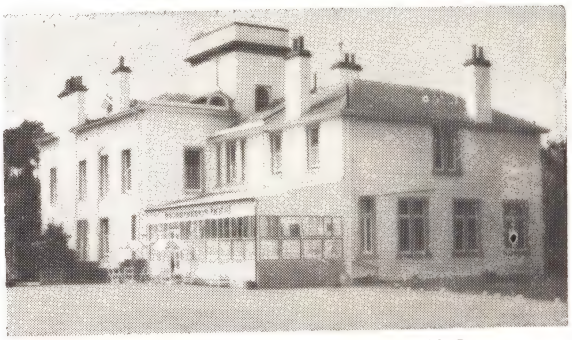

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THE lovely coastline of Moray and Nairn, extending to over fifty miles, provides an area where visitor and local alike can enjoy excellent sailing, canoeing, dinghy racing, power cruising and even water ski-ing. The waters of the Moray Firth offer the best of both worlds — freedom and variety coupled with shelter and safety — and so they are a great attraction for the holiday sailor or water sportsman and his family.

Although there are no large marinas along this coast, there is an excellent selection of small harbours and sailing centres from whence the visiting sailor or boatman can enjoy the marvellous small bays and coves which are such a feature of this area. The less-experienced sailor will also find that several of these centres will be able to provide instruction, help or advice — often all three — and very good launching ramps, piers or anchorages can be obtained at most of the larger ports, where, of course, the onshore amenities are usually first class.

At the western end of the shoreline lies the very popular holiday resort of Nairn, the capital town of Nairn District and renowned for its hotels, caravan sites, golf courses and shops as well as its lovely beaches. Nairn has an old harbour which is now used by a few lobster boats and by an ever-increasing number of pleasure craft of various types and sizes. The entrance to the harbour lies between two parallel piers which reach about 400 yards out to sea and, at low tide, the entrance channel dries out to about two or three feet of water. Most of the harbour is, unfortunately, also left with little water at low tide, but there is a pontoon mooring in the basin for larger sailing vessels. Nairn Sailing Club have a clubroom at the harbour and this go-ahead organisation are always willing to help the holiday sailor in every possible way. There is a slipway here for small boats and this may be used by visitors as well as by local yachtsmen.

Eastwards from Nairn, a sandy coastline runs for about nine miles to Findhorn Bay and, along this stretch of shore the visiting sailor may search for the entrance to the lovely lagoons behind the long sandbar here. These lagoons or sheltered inlets are ideal for picnicing or swimming but the sailor must keep a weather eye open at all times or he will find his boat high and dry between tides.

Within the large and exceptionally sheltered waters of Findhorn Bay stands the village of Findhorn, which can offer practically all the onshore services required by the keen yachtsman. Formerly a small but picturesque village, Findhorn has, within recent years, been transformed and extended and is now the 'Mecca' for dinghy sailors and others in this part of Scotland as well as being a thriving holiday resort which is almost filled to capacity in the summer season. Here, in 1935, was founded the district's first sailing club, now known as the Royal Findhorn Yacht Club, and its large and imposing premises next to the old harbour overlook the whole of the bay. The club organise many dinghy races and other sailing events throughout the season and have acted as hosts for national sailing events and championships on many occasions over the years — in fact, 'The Club,' as it is known locally, has gained a reputation as one of the finest sailing clubs in the North. Visiting yachtsmen are very welcome to join in most of these events and, although such visitors are officially allowed to use the club's facilities, this must be by arrangement with the club secretary.

Although the yacht club have posts and buoys marking the entrance to the channel, great care should be taken when entering or leaving Findhorn Bay as there is a strong current, the channel can become quite shallow at low tide and there is a

sandbar across the mouth. Despite these difficulties, the bay is a marvellous stretch of water for the experienced sailor or the novice. In the last few years 'Findhorn Sailing Centre' has been developed and enlarged and now has accommodation for over 20 residents and is staffed by at least four instructors. Groups and organisations are catered for at the centre and week-end or evening courses of instruction are arranged for visitors throughout the season. For the dinghy sailor arriving by road with his boat on tow there is ample car and dinghy parking space and a choice of two slips for launching. Chandlery, rigging, outboard engine repairs and other facilities are obtainable at the boatyard or at the garage or shops in the village. Findhorn Water-Ski Club has its base here, too, and offers holidaymakers the chance to watch or even take part in the thrilling sport of water-ski-ing.

Five miles east of Findhorn across the lovely safe and sheltered Burghead Bay lies the majestic headland of Burghead, and its harbour, under the rocky headland, is recognised by many sailors as one of the safest to enter in most conditions of wind and tide. For small craft there are two slips here — one at the harbour and the other leading on to the beach — but both present problems at low tide. However, there are some berths for large pleasure boats and small yachts in the basin, although, of course, this is basically a commercial harbour which is quite busy at certain times and harbour and bay are used regularly by many types of craft. There is an excellent boating centre at the harbour, with chandlery, dinghy park, outboard engine repairs, etc., available as well as car parking facilities.

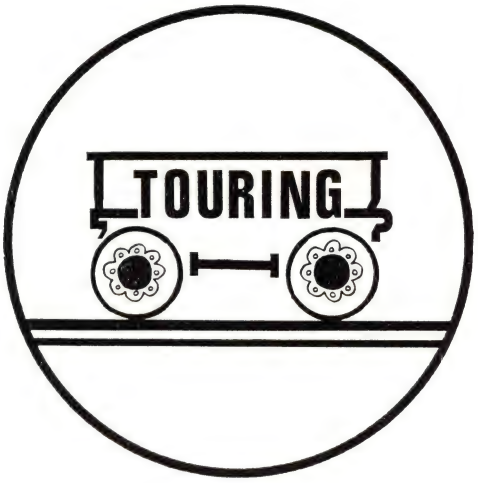
Another old and once busy commercial harbour which is now gaining popularity with various types of pleasure craft is to be found at Hopeman, about three miles east of Burghead. Only smaller types of boats can be launched over the beaches as there is no readily accessible launching slip and the main part of the harbour dries out at low tide. On the other hand, a chandlery is available nearby and visiting sailors are made welcome by the small boating fraternity here. Hopeman is also the base of the seamanship section of the famous Gordonstoun School, with its cutters and large sail cruisers.

Seven miles east of Hopeman is situated the very busy and fair-sized harbour of Lossiemouth, where a fleet of fishing boats still regularly unload their catches. The well-established local Sailing Club have their headquarters at the harbour and members have constructed a ramp for launching small craft but this slip can be very tricky when easterly winds blow and there is a heavy swell entering the harbour. Lossiemouth is quite a large town and a well-patronised holiday resort, so there are plenty of accommodation facilities, shops, chandleries (mainly commercial) and other amenities for the holiday sailor. The sailing club organise dinghy races and other competitions during the summer and visitors are very welcome to take part in these events. Farther east along this beautiful Moray Firth coast lies the picturesque old harbour of Portgordon. Formerly a busy trading port, it is now used by only a few small fishing boats and several pleasure craft. Although there are few boating facilities at the harbour, various types of dinghies and other small boats can be launched from the beach here and there is a car park nearby.

Two miles east of Portgordon is situated the well-known fishing port of Buckie with its large commercial harbour where boats can be launched by ramp or crane at all times, regardless of wind or tide. Facilities near this busy harbour include a boatyard, chandlery, car park, fuel, catering and toilets, etc., but most of these amenities are provided mainly for the benefit of the commercial vessels and the holiday sailor may find the industrial competition difficult to cope with here. There are some boats for hire but, again, these are mostly for sea-fishing. However, accommodation of various types is plentiful in the town and its outskirts, so Buckie can be an excellent centre for the tourist with a boat in tow.

Findochty, about three miles east of Buckie, is another quaint old fishing town with a lovely ancient harbour and pier, still used by a few small fishing boats. Visiting yachtsmen and other boating enthusiasts are welcomed and there is a launching ramp at the harbour for small craft as well as launching facilities at the nearby beach. There is also a handy car park, while provisions and most other necessities are easily obtainable. Another very fine centre for the holiday sailor with some experience is the old-fashioned small town of Portknockie, just east of Findochty. Small boats can be launched from the beach here at all times and facilities such as a car park, provisions, water, fuel, catering and toilets are all available in the town. The marvellous caves between Findochty and Portknockie are well worth a visit and can probably be best seen from a boat.

One of the finest harbours in this area for the keen yachtsman is to be found at Cullen, a popular holiday town a few miles east of Portknockie. Small craft of almost all types can be launched from the beach and amenities here include a car park, provisions, fuel, catering and toilets. In addition, there is an Education Outdoor Centre at Cullen which includes sailing instruction amongst its activities. Although, strictly speaking, the nearby villages of Sandend and Portsoy are not in Moray District, they are both well worth a visit by the holiday sailor if only for their wonderful cliff and beach scenery, and, in recent years, Portsoy has become quite a popular yachting centre.



These tours are mainly circular routes, and, although starting points are given for convenience, the tours can, of course, be joined and left at any point of the circle. The lovely scenery of the county, with its rivers, lochs and other facets of natural history, can be viewed on these tours and the roads are mainly well surfaced.

TOUR ONE – 70 miles

Nairn - Ferness - Dava - Grantown-on-Spey Dulnain Bridge - Carrbridge - Inverness - Nairn

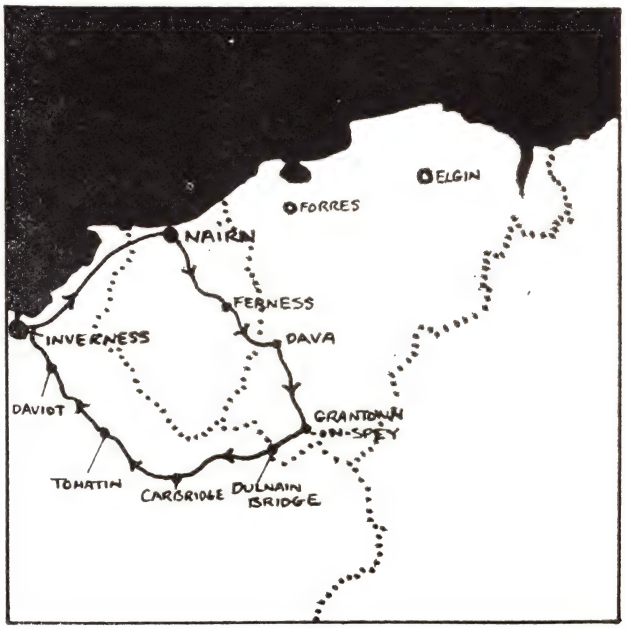
The capital town and administrative centre of the small district of Nairn, now part of the Highland Region, the seaside town of **Nairn** is well known as a first-class holiday resort with many attractions for visitors. It provides two sandy beaches, two 18-hole golf courses and a 9-hole course — Nairn Golf Club organise the principal 18-hole venue, which is a championship course of a very high standard. Other amenities here include an indoor swimming pool, tennis, bowls, fishing, sailing and an excellent shopping centre. A museum has recently been set up at Fishertown and should be worth a visit. There is a wide and varied selection of accommodation within the town and the surrounding district with several hotels of varying size and type, guest houses and caravan sites. Nairn has a long history going back to the 12th century, but there are only a few relics of its ancient past to be seen today. One interesting feature, on the road to Forres and only a short distance from Nairn, is the famous 17th century Boath Dovecote, at **Auldearn,** a historic village, with hotels, guest houses and P.O.

From Nairn turn south on the A939 to the small village of **Ferness,** about 10 miles from Nairn. Near here can be seen Ardclach Bell Tower, a 17th century detached church tower of the parish church of **Ardclach.** Thence through Glenferness and across part of Dava Moor to the scattered hamlet of **Dava,** in Morayshire. Here the road from Forres (A490) joins our route and nearby lie the large inland waters of Lochindorb and Lochindorb Castle, at one time the stronghold of the infamous Wolf of Badenoch.

On across the main part of Dava Moor and then through lovely woodlands to the attractive, picturesque and popular holiday resort of **Grantown-on-Spey** now in the Badenoch and Strathspey District of the Highland Region. Situated on the banks of the River Spey, fishing is naturally one of the main attractions of the area but there is also a very fine 18-hole golf course in the town as well as tennis courts and bowling green. The town itself is very well planned and a lovely tree-lined square provides the main focal point. Accommodation is plentiful and varied, with many hotels (large and small), guest houses and caravan sites, and there are plenty of shops, garages, etc. In addition, there are some lovely walks near the town, particularly in the lovely wooded slopes by the banks of the River Spey.

At Grantown-on-Spey turn west to **Dulnain Bridge,** where the road crosses the River Dulnain. From this attractive village, now also in Badenoch and Strathspey District, one can take the A95 towards the south-west and join the main Inverness-Perth road (A9) near **Boat of Garten,** renowned for the osprey nest at nearby Loch Garten. It is only another seven miles or so down the trunk road to **Aviemore,** the famous summer and winter sports centre with its many facilities for the holidaymaker. The alternative route from Dulnain Bridge is by the A938 to join the A9 at **Carrbridge,** another charming holiday centre. Some of the attractions here include ski-ing on the Cairngorms, fishing and a visit to the Landmark Visitors' Centre and its nature trail.

Carry on north-west on the A9 from Carrbridge, by way of **Tomatin,** a whisky distillery village, and the



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lovely hamlets of **Moy** and **Daviot,** to **Inverness,** the "Capital of the Highlands." Inverness, a busy and expanding town, is well known as a holiday and touring centre and is rich in antiquities, while there is fishing in the River Ness and cruising and boating on Loch Ness. The town has many hotels, guest houses and shops as well as at least two caravan parks, so the tourist is well catered for here.

However, if the traveller wishes to avoid the heavy traffic of the town and the A96 towards Nairn and the east, he can leave the A9 near Daviot and travel on the B851 to the famous and historic battlefield of Culloden Moor, scene of Bonnie Prince Charlie's defeat at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. The museum here is owned by the National Trust for Scotland. Near the battlefield there is a restaurant and a short distance away there is a caravan site run by the Caravan Club of Britain. On then to the picturesque hamlet of **Croy,** and near here is the charming village of **Cawdor** with its 17th century church. Also in this district is Cawdor Castle, a magnificent medieval building with a drawbridge, which is situated in the beautiful estate grounds. The castle, the family seat of the Earl of Cawdor, is now open to the public and should be well worth a visit.

The tourist can return directly to **Nairn** via the B9090 or B9091, but it is well worth the short detour to take the B9006 from Croy, cross the main A96, and then on to **Ardersier** and **Fort George.** The battlements and barracks of this ancient fort are still well preserved and now include the regimental museum of the Seaforth Highlanders and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. In this area lies Castle Stewart, an interesting towerhouse built in 1606, but unfortunately, it is not open to the public. From Fort George it is only a few miles back to the trunk road (A96) and then back to Nairn after a very attractive short tour with a tremendous variety of scenery en route.

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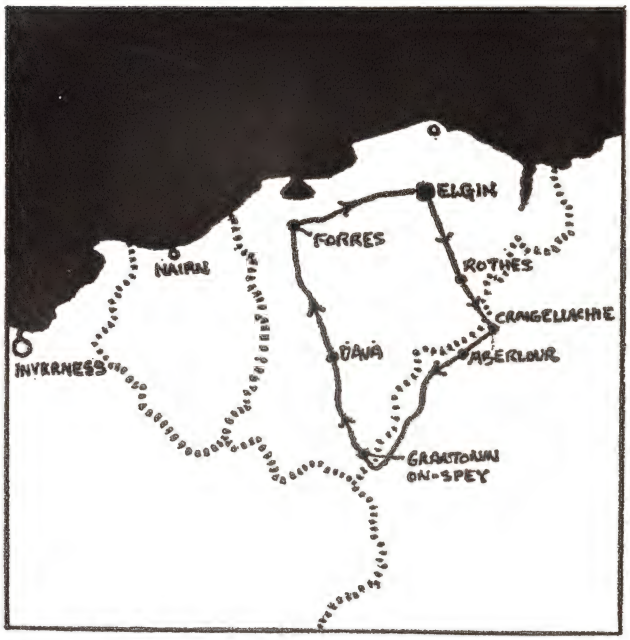
TOUR TWO – 72 miles

Elgin - Rothes - Craigellachie - Aberlour Grantown-on-Spey - Dava - Forres - Elgin



The cathedral city of **Elgin** is the capital town and administrative centre of Moray District and provides the holidaymaker with an excellent selection of shops, accommodation and entertainments. Once the seat of the Bishops of Moray, the cathedral, built originally in 1224, but burnt by the "Wolf of Badenoch" in 1390, dominates the lovely Cooper Park, at the east end of the town, and the remaining structures of this ancient building prove a marvellous tourist attraction on their own. Elgin, with railway and bus stations, is a first-class touring centre for the area and amenities here include an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, bowling green, a cinema, an indoor swimming pool and very fine town hall. There are several good hotels and guest houses as well as some fine restaurants.

Starting off to the south-east from Elgin, on the A941 via **New Elgin**, it is a pleasant trip of about 10 miles, past the whisky distillery hamlet of **Thomshill** and several other well-kept distilleries, to the pleasant small town of **Rothes.** This town is renowned for its Speyside distilleries and for the remains of Leslie's Rothes Castle which overlook the main street. With the River Spey almost "on the doorstep," this is, naturally, a popular fishing district and anglers are catered for at the several hotels and guest houses in the area and the shops in the town include one or two craft centres.

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About three or four miles farther on, the traveller enters the village of **Craigellachie,** on the banks of the River Spey. This attractive village is, of course, a well-known fishing centre, with two or three hotels and several guest houses, while nearby are situated the ruins of Balvenie Castle, mostly 15th century, and one of the largest and best preserved ruins in the North of Scotland. Just before coming to Craigellachie, however, the tourist can make a short detour from the main route by taking the B9102 to **Archiestown,** a well-planned village of the mid-18th century. Standing nearly 700 feet above sea level and about two miles from the River Spey, this sizeable village has a hotel and a few guest houses as well as a craft centre.

From Craigellachie the route lies south-west on the A95, whence it is only a few miles to **Aberlour,** a quiet village with a long, wide main street. There is excellent fishing nearby and a few hotels, guest houses and shops in the village cater well for the holidaymaker. In this area there are, once more, some fine whisky distilleries. Carrying on to the south-west one travels past the hamlet of **Advie,** where the Bridge of Advie crosses the River Spey, and through Strath Spey, with its marvellous scenic views, to the village of **Cromdale,** where there is an outdoor centre. The parish church, dating from 1809, stands half-a-mile away on the banks of the Spey and there is a hotel in the village to cater for the visiting anglers. The tourist is now in the Badenoch and Strathspey District of Inverness-shire once again.

About three miles on from Cromdale the traveller, instead of turning north over the Spey and into **Grantown-on-Spey,** can take the B970, which leads through **Nethybridge,** a quiet fishing village with hotels and guest houses, and then on to **Boat of Garten,** a popular fishing centre and well known for its connection with the famous osprey nest at nearby Loch Garten. From here it is only a mile or two before the road joins the main A9 (Inverness-Perth road) at a point about half-a-dozen miles north of **Aviemore,** the renowned all-weather, all-sports tourist centre.

However, our main route lies by way of **Grantown-on-Spey,** a popular holiday town on the banks of the River Spey. This lovely planned town, founded in 1766, offers many attractions to the visitor — walks in the wooded approaches to the river, pony-trekking, golf (18-hole course), tennis, bowls and excellent fishing and, in the winter months, ski-ing on the nearby Cairngorms. This is a fine shopping centre, too, and there is a grand selection of hotels and guest houses as well as a caravan park to cater for the many tourists who throng here each year.

From Grantown-on-Spey the route is now by way of the A939, across the Dava Moor and through the scattered hamlet of **Dava** which is near the large fishing waters of Lochindorb. At Dava, we take the right fork and travel on the A940 through some beautiful and varied scenery to follow the valley of the River Findhorn, another famous fishing-stream. After passing the junction with the B9007 road to **Ferness** there is a well-known beauty spot, called **Randolph's Leap,** where the river rushes through a rocky gorge.

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A beautiful part of the River Findhorn near Gervally Farm and about eight miles south-west of Forres on the B9007.

On then to join the main A96 trunk road at the Royal Burgh of **Forres,** a very ancient, charming town and excellent shopping and touring centre, overlooked by the Cluny Hill and its memorial tower. Off the attractive High Street are many closes with terraces of 18th century cottages, and at the east end of the town is the famous Pictish monument called Sueno's Stone. A feature of the town is the lovely public park with a recently built sunken garden nearby, while sporting facilities include fishing, tennis, bowls and there is a fine 18-hole golf course near the Cluny Hill. Accommodation is plentiful, with a variety of hotels, guest houses and a caravan park, and there are several restaurants in this popular holiday town. The outskirts of the town provide some excellent short walks through pleasant wooded countryside. These walks — such as Muiryshade, Altyre Wood, Cluny Hill and Springfield, are all within easy reach of the centre of the town.

Travelling east now on the A96, roughly half-way between Forres and **Elgin**, lies the small village of **Alves,** formerly known as Crook of Alves. Nearby is a pleasant and well-organised caravan and camping site and there are a few guest houses in the area. Just after Alves, and before returning to **Elgin,** it is well worth the divergence to branch off right to visit Pluscarden Abbey, in the Vale of St Andrew and district of **Pluscarden.** Originally established in 1230 and re-established as a Priory in 1943, the Benedictine Monks are restoring this fascinating old abbey and visitors are warmly welcomed. There is also a well-planned picnic site in the vicinity.

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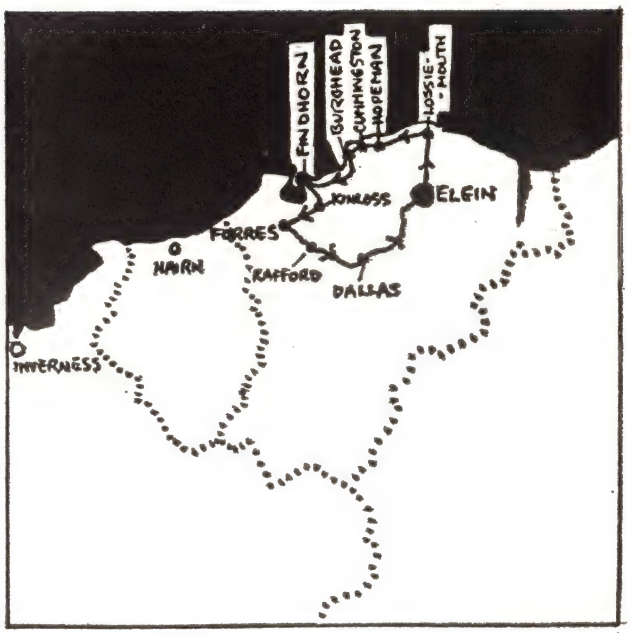
TOUR THREE – 42 miles

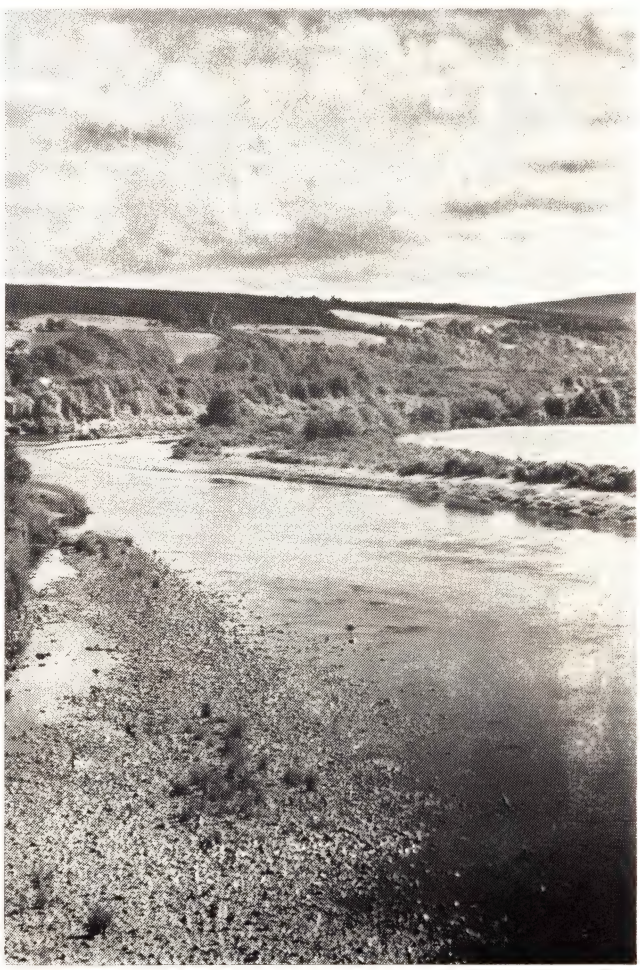
Elgin - Lossiemouth - Hopeman - Burghead
Findhorn - Forres - Rafford - Dallas - Elgin



The ancient city of **Elgin** is also the chief town of Moray and is thus a busy, prosperous city with almost everything the tourist could wish for by way of accommodation, entertainments and shopping. The remains of Elgin Cathedral, built in the 13th century and overlooking the pleasant Cooper Park, are a main feature of the ancient history of the town, while the Bishop's House is the ruin of what, by tradition, was the town house of the Bishops of Moray — it is not open to the public but can be viewed from the outside. With railway and bus stations and good roads leading off in various directions, Elgin is an ideal touring centre for the area and, for the sporting holidaymaker, there are provisions for golf, tennis and bowls. The main tourist information centre for the region is also situated in the city.

Leaving the north side of Elgin on the A941 via Bishopmill, a suburb of the city, it is only five miles to **Lossiemouth,** a very popular holiday resort on the coast of the Moray Firth. This renowned fishing port was the birthplace of Ramsay Macdonald and is divided into two main parts — the older Seatown, along the River Lossie, and the later Victorian town on the hill. Towards Covesea Lighthouse, to the west of the town, there is a very fine 18-hole championship golf course, lying between the large aerodrome and the sea, and these excellent links attract many holiday golfers each year, while another 18-hole course is planned and should be opened in the near future — in fact, a few holes are already in use. Bowls and tennis are also available in the town and there is sailing from the harbour. The two beautiful sandy beaches here provide enjoyment for all the family, and there is very good accommodation to be obtained at several hotels, guest houses and a large caravan park near the golf course.

From Lossiemouth travel along the coast road (B9040) towards the several seaside resorts of this area, the first of which is **Hopeman**. Before reaching Hopeman, however, it is worth the short detour to leave the coast (via the B9012) and visit the pleasant old village of **Duffus,** with its parish church of St Peter's, built in 1868. Near the village, too, are the remains of Duffus Castle, one of the finest examples of a Motte and Bailey castle in Scotland—it is open to the public at all reasonable times. Returning to the coast road again, the village of **Hopeman** is well worth a visit, if only for its lovely beaches and fine 9-hole golf course. There is a good small harbour and sailing is available here although launching facilities are rather



Part of the River Spey at Fochabers. This is one of the most beautiful sections of this famous salmon-fishing river and there are splendid walks near the riverside.

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The Department of Recreation maintains Caravan Parks close to fine, sandy beaches at Burghead and Lossiemouth, inland at Keith, and adjacent to the old fishing harbours at Buckie, Cullen, Findochty and Portknockie.

There are indoor Swimming Pools at Buckie, Elgin, Forres and Keith and a municipal Golf Course at Forres.

Leaflets on Golf, Fishing and Caravan Sites obtainable from :

The Director of Recreation, Moray and District Council, 30/32 High Street, ELGIN.
Telephone Number Elgin 45121
to whom further enquiries should be addressed.

limited. There are a few hotels and guest houses in the village while the Covesea caves can be entered from near here.

Three miles west of Hopeman lies the fishing port of **Burghead,** where the sailing facilities are good and where the Outward Bound Sea School have their headquarters. There is always something interesting to see at this fine old harbour and, near Burghead Point, and cut out of solid rock, there is a Pictish well-chamber which should not be missed. Near the village are two small caravan sites, while, in Burghead itself, there are a few hotels and guest houses. Now on the B9089, it is a pleasant few miles' drive through some grand farmland to the crossroads near the Royal Air Force base at **Kinloss,** where the tiny village supports a restaurant, a few shops and some guest houses.

Turn towards the coast again here and it is only a short distance to the very popular holiday resort of **Findhorn,** with its excellent sandy beaches. This is a well known sailing and yachting centre, having sheltered moorings, two slips for launching and other boating facilities. The Royal Findhorn Yacht Club have been established here for several years and provide sailing instruction for beginners as well as helping the holiday yachtsman in many ways, and there is even water ski-ing available here. Pony-trekking is available in the vicinity, and there is fishing, tennis and bowls in the village.

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Part of Lossiemouth harbour. This is still a busy fishing port and is also becoming popular as a sailing centre.

There are several interesting old buildings among the cluster of cottages in the village and, nearby, is the Findhorn Foundation, a semi-religious community whose way of life and lovely flower gardens attract visitors from all over the world. A feature of Findhorn and district is the accommodation offered by two large and well-organised caravan sites, while there are a few hotels and guest houses.

From Findhorn it is only a few miles before the traveller enters **Forres,** on the main A96 trunk road. This charming town and royal burgh offers excellent attractions for the tourist, whether his interest lies in antiquities, sport or simply beautiful, quiet walks in the public park or down by the River Findhorn. Sporting facilities include golf, putting, tennis, bowls, and a swimming pool, with fishing nearby, while a variety of accommodation is provided by several hotels, guest houses and a small caravan park. The attractive main street of the town is well endowed with various types of shops and a few restaurants, and there is a museum in the town. When you leave Forres take the B9010 to the south through the straggling village of **Rafford** and then south-east to **Dallas,** a pleasant village in the valley of the River Lossie. The parish church dates from 1793 and is situated about half-a-mile from the village at Bridge of Lossie, while in the churchyard is the ancient Dallas Cross. Fishing is available here and the local hotel is, no doubt, a favourite "angler's rest".

After turning east at Dallas the journey is now nearly complete but, before returning to **Elgin,** the tourist would be well advised to visit Pluscarden Abbey, where the Benedictine Monks are kept busy restoring the ancient building and looking after the adjoining gardens. Another popular spot in this district is Monaughty Forest, with its forest walks, picnic areas and car park.

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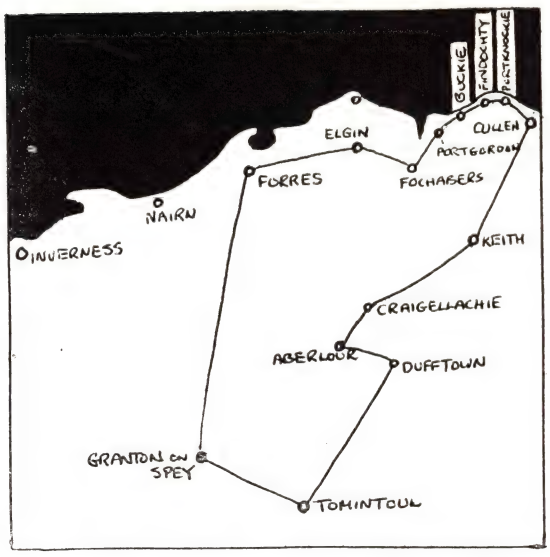

From **Elgin**, the capital town of the large district of Moray, with all the services of a good-sized city and its great historical associations, travel east on the A96, the main road to Aberdeen. In four miles the traveller comes to **Lhanbryde**, a pleasant village with hotels and a few shops. Here is the junction with a minor road to **Garmouth,** a scattered hamlet with a nine-hole golf course, near the mouth of the River Spey. Keeping on the main road, it is only another four or five miles to the scattered village of **Mosstodloch**, at the junction of a road to **Kingston,** a small hamlet on the coast. A mile farther on the main A96 and near the River Spey lies the attractive, peaceful holiday town of **Fochabers,** which celebrated its bicentenary recently. This is a popular angling centre and, on the south side of its tree-lined square, lies the old Bellie Parish Church flanked by two Georgian houses. Fochabers is also a good shopping centre and two hotels, several guest houses and a nearby caravan site cater for the needs of the many visitors here. Tennis and bowls are other attractions for holidaymakers and there is a swimming pool at the caravan site. To the north lies the small village of **Spey Bay,** at the mouth of the River Spey, and noted for its salmon fishing and 18-hole seaside golf course. There is a hotel here and a few guest houses in the area.

From Fochabers take the A98 towards Cullen but, about four miles along this road, turn left towards the coast on the A990, and, in no time, one arrives at **Portgordon,** a small town on the Moray Firth. At one time this was a busy trading port but now the harbour is quiet and mainly used for a little sea-fishing and pleasure boating. There is a crafts workshop here, with one or two hotels and a few guest houses to cater for the visiting holidaymaker. Two miles east lies **Buckie,** a fair-sized town with a population of over 7500. This is an important white fish and herring port with one of the largest and most modern harbours on the Moray Firth coast. Sporting facilities here include tennis, bowls, sea-fishing and there are excellent 18-hole golf courses at nearby **Strathlene** and **Buckpool.** Swimming and bathing are also popular from the lovely beaches in the sheltered coves of the area. Of course, the town is a fine shopping centre and accommodation is well catered for by several hotels, guest houses and a caravan site.

Still travelling east along the coastal route (now the A942) from Buckie it is only about three miles to **Findochty,** a small sea-fishing town with a picturesque harbour and pier. There are several interesting caves and some pleasant coves on the seafront, while there is a bowling green in the town and a golf course at nearby **Strathlene.** Attractively painted houses are a feature of Findochty, and there are a few guest houses and a caravan site in the area. A few miles farther on lies the fascinating little town of **Portknockie** with its old harbour and interesting caves and rock formations. Sporting facilities here include tennis, bowls, putting, sea-fishing, boating and there is a popular paddling pool. There are a hotel and a few guest houses in the town and its outskirts.

From Portknockie rejoin the main A98 and then it is only a short distance to the very picturesque old fishing town of **Cullen,** a popular holiday resort with several hotels, guest houses and a caravan site. There are ample opportunities for the sporting visitor here — sea-fishing (as well as river and loch angling), tennis, bowls, boating and golf (18-holes) are probably the major interests. Other attractions in the area are Cullen House (no longer open to the public) and Findlater Castle, both former homes of the Earls of Seafield and their families. There is a tourist information centre, some good shops and a restaurant in the town. Farther east, between Cullen and **Portsoy,** lies the quaint old village of **Sandend,** with its small harbour and majestic cliff scenery. Both Sandend and Portsoy (famous for its craft workshop which shapes and polishes the Portsoy Marble) are well worth a visit.

However, our route from Cullen is now on the B9018 to **Keith** which stands on the main Elgin to Aberdeen road (A96). This is a busy market town in a good farming area and, as such, is an excellent shopping and touring centre. The Strathisla whisky distillery is nearby and visitors are welcome to see the processes of this ancient industry, and tweed mills are another feature of the town. Sporting facilities here include golf (18 holes), putting,

tennis, bowls and a swimming pool in the local Grammar School. Accommodation for tourists is well catered for by several hotels, guest houses and a caravan site, while there are some good restaurants and a tourist information office in the town.

Our route from Keith is by way of the A95 to the south-west and the valley of the River Spey. After a run of 12 miles through a lovely mixture of farmland, moorland and forest we arrive at **Craigellachie,** an attractive whisky distillery village and fine angling centre beautifully situated where the River Fiddich joins the Spey. There are tennis courts here and a few hotels and guest houses as well as two or three shops. Carrying on the A95 from Craigellachie it is only a short distance and a worthwhile diversion for the traveller to visit **Aberlour,** another whisky town pleasantly situated on the River Spey. Naturally, this is a great salmon and trout angling centre and there are also tennis courts, while the visitors' needs are well catered for by several hotels, guest houses, shops, restaurants and most other services.

A quieter and more picturesque route away into the hills is to leave Craigellachie and travel on the A941 for four miles to the small town of **Dufftown,** a centre of the whisky distilling industry — there are no less than six distilleries in the surrounding district, many of whom welcome visitors. As well as a nine-hole golf course and some excellent fishing waters, the holidaymaker can enjoy tennis and bowls in the town. Mortlach Parish Church (one of the oldest churches in Scotland), the 11th century Auchindoun Castle and the 13th century Balvenie Castle are well-known historic buildings (or ruins) in the vicinity and attract many sightseers each year. The town supports a hotel, a few guest houses, restaurants and the usual shops.

From Dufftown the route now lies on the minor road (B9009) to the south-west. This is a hazardous trip in winter but is a pleasant run in the summer. However, the scenery among the hills and moorlands of this area is magnificent and eventually one arrives at **Tomintoul,** one of the highest villages in Scotland and certainly the highest in the Highlands at 1200ft. above sea level. Again, there is some grand salmon and trout angling here, also tennis courts, while the shops include a post office and wine and delicatessen shop. This is a fine touring centre, especially for the hillwalker and the naturalist. Accommodation is available at several hotels, guest houses and a caravan site.

Turning north on to the A939 from Tomintoul it is only 14 miles to **Grantown-on-Spey,** the ever-popular tourist resort in the valley of the Spey. With fishing, golf, bowls, tennis, pony trekking, woodland walks, etc., this beautifully planned town offers many attractions for the visitor, while accommodation, shops and other services are all first class. From Grantown-on-Spey keep on northwards on the A939 and the route is now by way of **Dava** and the wild heather hills of Dava Moor to the ancient and charming royal burgh of **Forres,** always a popular holiday and touring centre. Plenty of sporting facilities here and an abundance of hotels, guest houses, shops and restaurants. After Forres, the main A96 to the east soon sees the traveller back to **Elgin** once more.

The ruined Duffus Castle, not far from Lossiemouth and Burghead. About the year 1300 a stone tower was erected here but half of it has slipped down the steep hill.

'PACKAGE-DEAL' GOLF MAY ATTRACT NEW SPORTSMEN TO AREA

by Norman E. Faid

In August last year, I made my 24th unsuccessful appearance in Duff House Royal's Annual Five-Day Tournament. But this time there was a difference — in my favourite parking place, surrounded by ropes and admiring bystanders, stood a shining Triumph TR7 and, on its bonnet, reclined, not a buxom and bikinied blonde, but a large notice suggesting that an irresistible trial run was easily available on demand. On the path leading from the eighteenth green, no doubt to tempt weary and despondent golfers, was a long, narrow strip of cloth extolling the delights of Banff Springs Hotel. The local undertaker had thoughtfully advertised as a joiner in the out-of-bounds area between the second and third fairways, and on my way out, I passed adverts from chemists, manufacturers of agricultural implements and retailers of pig food. At the ninth tee, where there are always delays whilst optimistic but inaccurate golfers try to convince themselves that their balls intended to bounce from the raised left side of the green towards the pin, are still on the river bank and not in the river, I came upon a tasteful wooden erection, placed by Moray District Council. Always eager to study the activities of Local Government, I obtained from it a brilliant orange sheet of paper with, on the front, a picture bearing a striking resemblance to Gary Player and above it, in large letters "Moray for Golf."

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On reading this brochure, I was most impressed by what was being offered to visitors to Moray District. For a Tourist Five-Day Golf Ticket (adults, £6; youngsters under 17, £3) the holiday-maker, if sufficiently robust, could play a maximum of 36 holes on all the 11 golf courses in Moray District. The only restrictions were that a visitor with this ticket could not tee off after 4 p.m. and obviously not during local competitions. But, considering that one round of golf nowadays costs, in most places, from £1.50 to £3.00, this ticket must be just about the best bargain since Woolworths was invented. Also its very existence impresses one with the friendly spirit of the golf clubs in this district and their eagerness to share the delights of their courses with visitors from all over the world.

Because golf in Moray is relatively cheap, one must not suppose it to be of inferior quality — far from it. The two courses at Lossiemouth are well worth a visit. The championship course is first class by any standard and provides a challenging test of golf. The fairways admittedly are broad, but they are lined with sinister whins, which seem to stretch octopus tentacles to catch a bad shot. The semi-rough at many holes is short heather, which, unless you are Jack Nicklaus, will add undesired strokes to your score, and, if the wind is blowing strongly — it often is — great judgment is required in playing shots to the greens. The short course, according to the brochure, is suitable for "those interested in family golf," but it is nevertheless, a good little links course with undulating fairways, and plenty of whin and bunkers. The Moray Golf Club Clubhouse is situated on a hill above the 18th green, and, from it, one can look out over the courses and admire the view of the bay, the lighthouse (the keepers are friendly and will show you over on request), and the hills of Sutherland in the distance.

A few miles west of Lossiemouth lies the village of Hopeman, which has its own little nine-hole golf course of nearly 2500 yards. The new clubhouse, which, about three years ago, replaced their venerable railway carriage, has all the usual facilities, including an adjacent and spacious car park. The 6th hole, "Priesach," is surprisingly well-known and very like Clivet Head at Royal Tarlair, in Macduff. Both are about 130 yards long, in both cases there is a drop of about 100 feet between tee and green, and, on both courses, on windy days, balls are lost with alarming frequency.

If one goes east from Lossiemouth, the next course on the coast is Spey Bay, which is a full 18-hole course set in rolling terrain between the villages of Spey Bay and Portgordon. It is very much a traditional out-in layout. The

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first seven holes go generally towards Portgordon, and the last seven, which lie to the north or seaward side of the links, return towards Spey Bay itself. The clubhouse provides changing facilities only, but refreshments and meals are provided at the adjacent hotel. Only a mile or so south of Spey Bay, lies the nine-hole Garmouth and Kingston golf course. Although not quite at the seaside, it has the good springy turf of a links course and is good for grandfathers to take their grandsons for initiation into the mysteries, whilst sons are dealing with the greater challenges of Spey Bay. Within the last year or so, the small and rather ugly hut which, for years, served local golfers has been replaced by a modern clubhouse.

Going farther east, the questing golfer reaches Buckie, the largest town in the former Banffshsire, and finds that he has a choice of two fine courses. On the west side of the town, about half-a-mile from the twin spires of St Peter's Church (Buckie's most obvious landmark), lies Buckpool Golf Club. When I first saw it, about 25 years ago, the course was newly restarted after the war years and the clubhouse was an adapted cottage. The course has now matured and the clubhouse keeps adding parts, which, though Sir Christopher Wren might have found distressing, have certainly produced a comfortable and commodious clubhouse. The course is reasonably long and offers fair variety — about half the holes are true seaside holes with sandy subsoil, clutching whins and the usual little hummocks near the greens, which add a small element of luck to approach shots.

Buckie's other golf course, Strathlene, lies to the west of the town and is most easily reached by driving past the harbour. If time permits, it is interesing to stop and look at the various fishing boats and pleasure craft. Strathlene clubhouse is new and, although architecturally a little odd — the second storey was built on top of the first almost as an afterthought — it is very comfortable and contains a good bar and lounge, while there is also a well-equipped professional's shop. The course itself extends westwards to Findochty War Memorial, overlooking Findochty's quaint old harbour. Those not familiar with Findochty would find some interest in the impressive statue of the seated fisherman gazing out to sea which carries the fitting inscription, "These have seen the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." Whoever designed Strathlene golf course knew his job and made very good use of the ground, particularly of the hill which contains, on its east side, the 4th green; on its west, the 10th; and, on its south, the 13th. Although the course is less than 6000 yards long, the S.S.S. of 69 is seldom equalled.

If Heath Robinson ever designed a golf course, it must have been Cullen, which lies between the Seatown of Cullen and the little town of Portknockie. In the evenings, the locals of Cullen start at the first hole and those of Portknockie at the ninth — it seems to work very amicably. Cullen has six greens high up on the rising ground beside the old railway, while the twelve remaining holes are true links holes, stretching along the shores of the bay. The course is only 4600 yards long and par is 63, but it is by no means easy, for natural hazards abound. The 12th green is particularly difficult to reach and to stay on; either the tee-shot is just too short and the ball rolls down the slope away from the green, or the shot lands on the green, which is small and sloping, and bounces away through and down the hill. Timid players find the 13th, over a high rock, very unlucky indeed. But Cullen is fun to play and is full of friendly members — if you play with anybody called Ross you will almost certainly be beaten! The clubhouse here, too, has recently been improved and extended.

As well as the courses mentioned, Moray advertises three inland courses. Forres has a most attractive course of 6141 yards to the south of the town, behind the hill — the views from the course are delightful and varied and it provides a good test of skill. The soil is light and well drained so that golf may be played all the year round. I find particularly attractive the way that many of the holes lie along valleys and are therefore hidden away from each other. The modern, well-equipped bar can provide the usual drinks and, indeed, the necessary solid refreshment.

The comparatively new golf course at Keith lies adjacent to the park at Fife Keith. It has a small but well-designed clubhouse and the course itself improves with maturity. The last time I visited it I was impressed by the greens. The course is undulating and has two very difficult par threes — the third hole requires a fairly long shot of a little over 200 yards to a small green which is half hidden by a projection of woodland; the eighth requires a drive of about 240 yards, slightly uphill, to a well-bunkered green with an out-of-bounds on its left. The views southwards to the mountains are delighful.

In Dufftown is the shortest of Moray's golf courses — a mere 2265 yards. Nevertheless, because it lies on a hillside, it is more difficult than it looks, for players have to strike the ball from sloping lies to small greens. The mountain air is bracing and the views are splendid. The clubhouse facilities are operated by members and are not, therefore, always available, though, if I remember rightly, the course is always open and there is a box for green fees.

So much for the courses offered by Moray District Council, which, as it happens, include most of the courses in Moray and Nairn.

There yet remain several very fine courses. Elgin's Hardhillock golf course is a good example of an inland course, well laid out and artistically planted with groups of trees and shrubs which are pleasing to the eye and help to break a somewhat open terrain. The course is of a moorland nature and is overlooked by an old but remarkably comfortable clubhouse behind the 18th green and looking towards the distant mountains, nearer to which we find the pleasant little course at Grantown-on-Spey — it lies astride the scenic road from Grantown to Craigellachie. The first few holes are easy, but the course becomes stiffer as it moves towards the woodlands sloping down towards the Spey. The air is full of the scent of the pines and scenically this is a most beautiful course. The clubhouse is modern and commodious and, of course, Grantown-on-Spey itself is a most attractive town with several fine hotels.

Last, but not least, comes Nairn. Nairn is, in its own way a very interesting town and it recognises the value of its golf links and of its hotels. From time to time one sees advertisements for golf week-ends in spring and autumn, when keen golfers may stay at one of the hotels and have access to Nairn Golf Club, including tuition by the local professional (Gregor McIntosh) or sometimes by celebrities such as Dai Rees, and the terms are relatively cheap. Nairn has three courses. The championship course has an aristocratic elegance and lies to the west of the town on the shores of the Moray Firth. Surprisingly, there are no dunes between the first few fairways and the icy waters of the Firth. Thus the enterprising slicer may play his errant ball not only on to the shingle beach but also into the water. This situation opens the course to the wind but also gives wonderful views of the towering cliffs near Cromarty, on the other side of the Firth. The course is very well kept — the fairways are well trimmed and the greens fast and true. I have always felt this course to be as good as any in the British Isles, and those who have not yet played it would find it a great pleasure to do so. Adjacent to the first few and the last few holes of the championship course is a very short course suitable for beginners to start on, old-age pensioners to end on, or indeed for anybody who wants only a pleasant and easy nine holes.

Nairn Dunbar Course lies at the east side of the river and is separated from the Firth by Nairn's enormous caravan site, which must be able to accommodate about 1000 caravans. The links here are about as difficult as the championship course and provide a very good test of golf. For some reason that I have never been able to fathom, the first nine holes seem much harder than the second — the terrain is certainly much rougher on the south side of the course, while the north side, nearer the caravan site, is certainly much smoother and lacks really formidable rough.

As one may gather from this article, Moray and Nairn are well worth a visit by any golfer!

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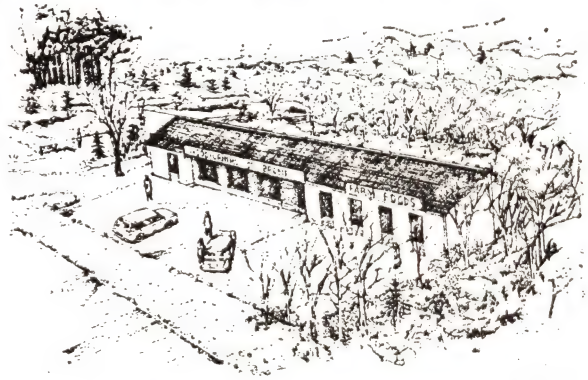

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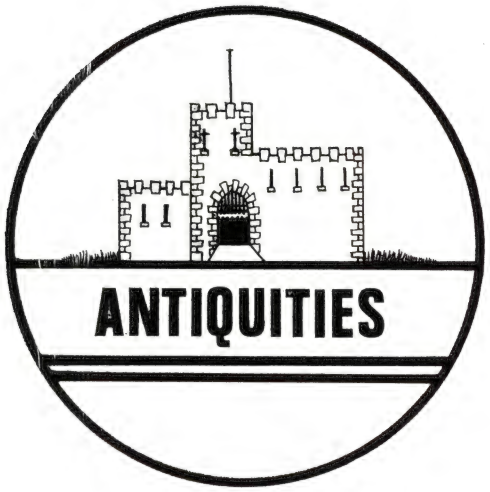


FISHING TRADITIONS AND OTHER LEGENDS FROM ANCIENT TIMES

by William G. Cowie

ALTHOUGH Moray and Nairn are situated on the extreme North-east shoulder of Scotland, they have been in no way cold-shouldered by the Muse of History. From the time, long before the birth of Christ, the stocky, round-skulled people from far-off Spain steered their flimsy coracles to our shores the men of the Moray Firth have gone down to the sea in ships. Their standing stones, along the banks of the Spey and the Findhorn, give mute evidence of religious kinship with the builders of Stonehenge, far to the south.

Much of the lore of places such as Buckie and Lossiemouth concerns the fishing industry. Isla St Clair, born and bred in Buckie, acquired many of her traditional ballads from the old fisherfolk, while the motto of the town, 'Weel may the Boatie Row,' underlines this tradition of the sea. An adopted son of the North-east, Peter Anson, made his home at Harbour-head, near the now derelict Buckpool harbour, and his fine paintings, depicting the life of the fishers, were donated to the Buckie Museum. Fishing communities settled at Findochty in 1716, but even before that places like Lossiemouth, Hopeman, Cullen and Portknockie were sending out craft to catch the 'silver darlings.'

In 1874 the harbour at Portgordon was built by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, but now it is used mainly by anglers digging in its silt for lugworm. A brief flurry of excitement was caused by two Nazi spies who landed here from a U-boat during the last war but they were quickly apprehended due to the vigilance of the local police. A plaque on one of the houses in Garmouth records the place where Charles II, the 'Merry Monarch' as he was called, signed the Presbyterian Covenant after landing at nearby Kingston when he was still a Royal Prince. Probably his tongue was in his cheek at the time for he failed to keep his promise. Had he done so, the history of the Covenanters would surely have been very different.

Followers of Saint Columba brought the news of Christianity to the Pictish inhabitants of our area around 600 A.D. One of them, called Drostan, chose to build his monkish cell near the sparkling waters of a spring and people gathered around his humble home to form a small community. Charles Grant extended its size in early Victorian times and it became known as Charleston of Aberlour — the Aberlour-Glenlivet distillery is supposed to draw on the pure waters of this ancient spring to this day. Thomas Telford built a fine bridge at Craigellachie, two miles down-river, but it has recently been by-passed by a new and wider structure to avoid the old hairpin bend.

It may be that Columba, after dealing with the Inverness Druids, came as far east as Nairn — certainly, the town seal depicts the saint with an open Bible in his hand. These holy men who took up residence in the caves of the Moray Firth coast acted as physical as well as spiritual guides in some cases, and Lossiemouth's Saint Gerardine kept a lantern continually alight as an aid to worried mariners.

Nearer our own time, in the stormy aftermath of the Reformation, the many Catholics of the Enzie district were forced to worship in a farm building attached to a sheep-cote. Still in use as a place of worship, it is known locally as the 'Banffshire Bethlehem.' This district, too, can claim to be the birthplace of the first native Scot to be canonised. This was the Jesuit priest, John Ogilvie, who was recently declared a saint by Pope Paul. Ogilvie came from a well-to-do Keith family and was probably born in the Milton Tower, near the present-day railway station.

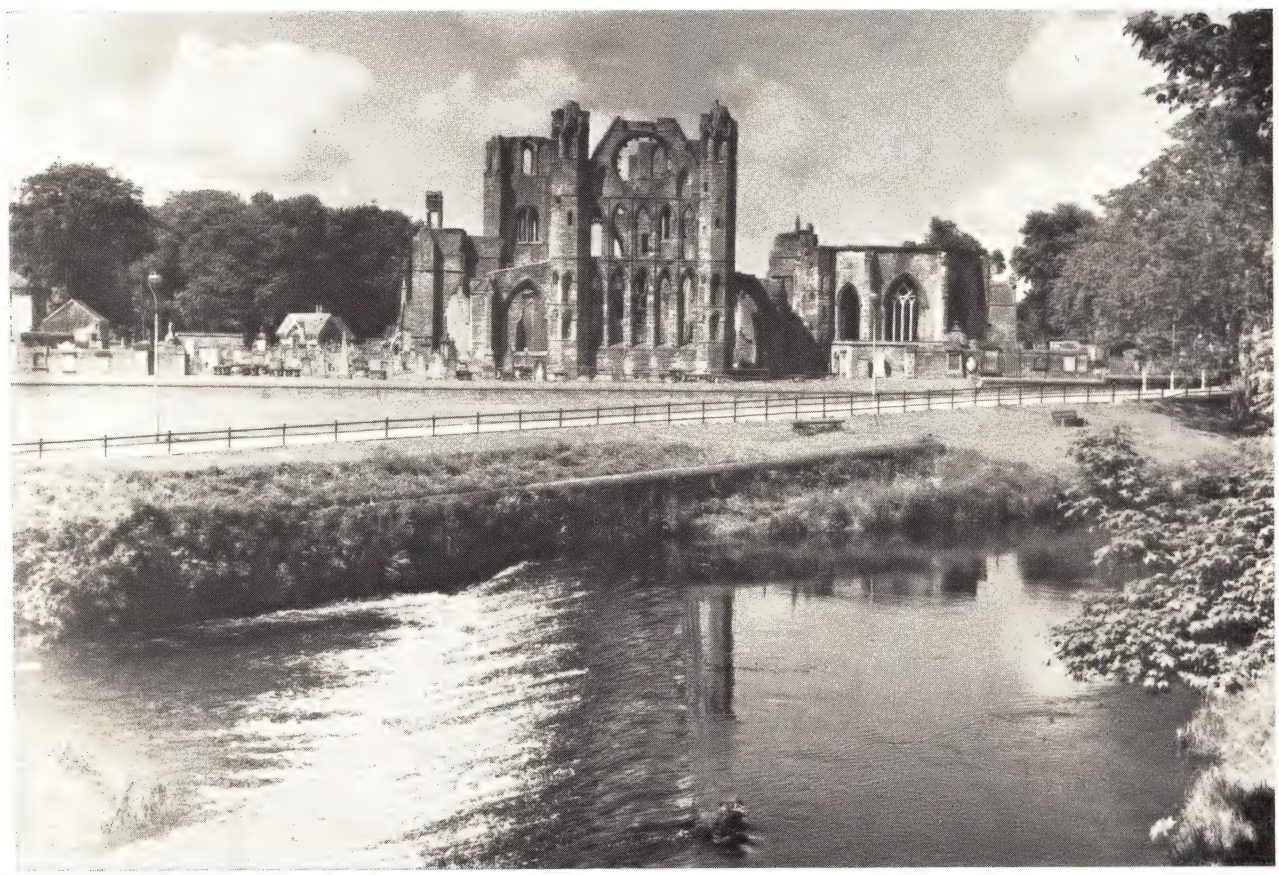
Near Elgin, a successful attempt to revive the virtues of the monastic way of life has been made at Pluscarden Priory. It was founded in 1236 and was taken over by the Benedictines in 1460. In

1946 a group of dedicated working monks took over and have gone a long way to restoring the abbey. If the visitor asks to see it, the monks will display the Burgie Necklace, a beautiful jet ornament from the Bronze Age, as well as fine examples of stained glass work and other crafts which they have kept alive in this secluded Moray retreat.

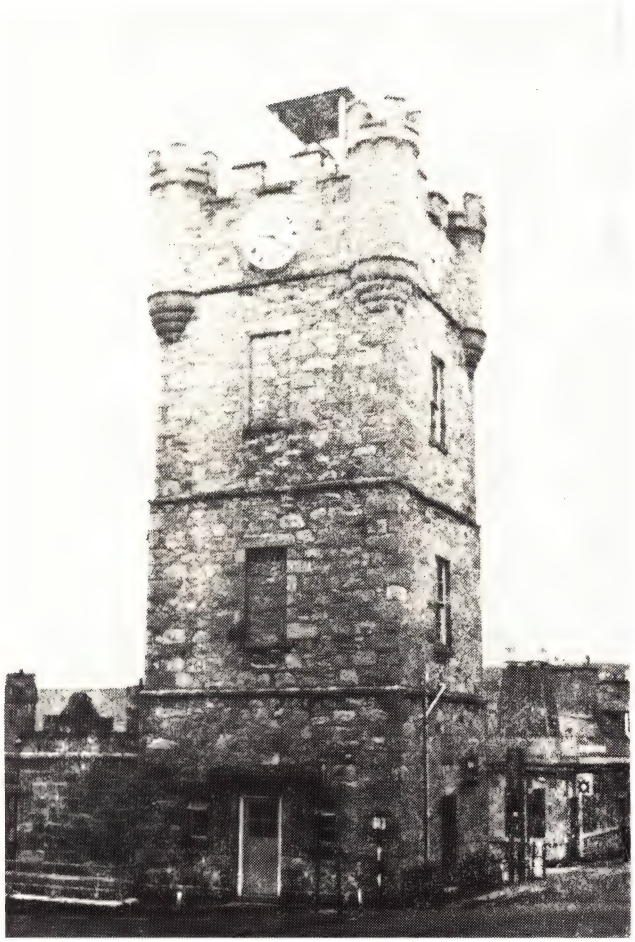
During the Second World War many Norwegians sailed their small, but sturdy, fishing craft to our shores rather than remain under the Nazi yoke, and a number of them settled here to become respected members of their communities. It was entirely different in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the cry went up from the churches: "From the rage of the Norsemen deliver us, O Lord!" Rape and pillage were commonplace in Moray at that time and the locals defended their land in a bitter resistance. Titanic struggles developed along the coast and even farther inland — near Findochty Castle, adjoining the present-day Strathlene golf course, there took place the 'Battle of the Hares (or Bauds).' At Dufftown, a natural defensive position marked later by the grand castles of Balvenie and Auchindoun saw some of the fiercest fighting. In the church of Mortlach, attractively situated on the Dullan Water, there is a 'battle stone' recalling a victory by Malcolm II over the Danes in 1010.

At last the clashes between the Moray men and the marauders from across the sea reached an end. Sweyno's Stone, standing at the east end of Forres, may record a peace treaty. On 'Auld Yule Nicht' (January 11) a curious custom dating from Viking times is observed in Burghead. A tar-filled barrel, known as the Clavie, is set alight and rolled down the Dorrie Hill. Pieces of the charred ashes are later collected and sent to Burghead exiles all over the world.

By the 14th century Elgin had emerged as the 'Lantern of the North' with its Saint Giles as its protector. High up in his island fortress at Lochindorb, near Grantown-on-Spey, King Robert III's brother, the 'Wolf of Badenoch,' eyed the prosperity of the church with envy, and on a dark night in 1390 the sky was lit by the great flames of the burning Cathedral. The Elgin bishops had a house near the Cathedral which is still standing but they took out insurance against another vicious attack and constructed the fortified palace of Spynie, whose impressive ruins lie about four miles to the north, near the Lossiemouth road. The cathedral was later rebuilt in great splendour but gradually it was left



The ruins of Elgin Cathedral, with part of the River Lossie in the foreground. Near the Cooper Park, in the centre of the city, the remnants of the Cathedral are well worth seeing.



The old Tolbooth Tower in Dufftown's main square traditionally marks the spot where, in 1010, Malcolm II defeated the Vikings.

to decay and the central tower collapsed in 1711. The part left was eventually cleaned up and the magnificent ruins still dominate the nearby Cooper Park.

The many ruined castles in Moray and Nairn typify the troubled state of these areas in the 13th and 14th centuries. Rait Castle, a Cheyne fortress near Nairn, reflects English architectural influence. A visit to Cawdor Castle — well known by readers of Shakespeare's unhistorical 'Macbeth' — is a must, while, at Darnaway Castle, you can shudder at the painting of the gashed body of the Bonnie Earl of Moray while recalling his dying words to his 'butcher,' Huntly:— "Man, ye hae spoiled a better face than yer ain!" Duffus Castle has slipped a bit down the slope since it was built in the twelfth century, while children now swing merrily in the shelter of the curtain wall which is all that is left of Rothes Castle, once the home of the proud Leslies.

Between Cullen and Sandend lie the few pieces left of the old Findlater Castle, once the home of the Earls of Huntly, although Cullen House, formerly the residence of the Seafields, was open to the pubilc until recently but has now been emptied of its treasures. Cullen itself has a long history and has had many famous visitors. Queen Elizabeth, Bruce's wife, died in the castle on the hill above the railway viaduct, while Robert Burns came here after being entertained at Gordon Castle, in Fochabers.

Famous warriors have used the North-east as a tactical background. Montrose defeated General Hurry by the old Boath Dovecote, near Auldearn. Bonnie Prince Charlie came here in retreat and spent some nights at Thunderton House (now a hotel) in Elgin. It is well known how he attempted to surprise Cumberland's forces at Nairn on the Duke's birthday but the plan miscarried badly. Shortly after Culloden had been fought the village of Tomintoul was founded and its height of 1160 feet makes it the highest village in the Highlands. The Lecht road, the approach road to the village from the south, rises to over 2000 feet in places.

From the many famous men and women who have lived and worked in Moray and Nairn one might well select Andrew of Moray, friend and co-fighter of William Wallace, or Alexander Graham Bell. whose attempts to make his deaf wife hear led to experiments in Elgin which eventually produced the telephone. Then there was James Ramsay Macdonald, Britain's first Socialist Prime Minister, who was born of humble parentage in 1866 — his cradle is on display in the Elgin Museum and his home, The Hillocks, still stands in his native Lossiemouth. In Portessie was born William Duthie, whose sterling work in the Ministry of Food as adviser to Winston Churchill earned him a well-merited knighthood.

One cannot leave the history of the region without referring to the fine spirit produced along the side of the River Spey — giving rise to our punning motto: 'Spe et Spiritu.' Moray, in particular, has always taken a leading part in the distilling of whisky, both legal and illicit — it is recorded that, in 1823, a group of Excise officers invaded Glenlivet and found 200 "sma stills" in active operation. The setting up of the modern 'Whisky Trail' has given a fresh stimulus to visitors to view the fine Speyside scenery and to sample its most celebrated product.

Space limits further comment, but excellent museums at Forres, Elgin, Buckie and Nairn can fill in other details for the visiting seeker after knowledge of our past.

NAIRN — 'TOURIST GEM OF THE NORTH-EAST'

The Royal Burgh of Nairn, because of its situation on the Moray Firth at the mouth of the River Nairn, has always been a natural communications centre and a market town for the surrounding excellent farming area. The town probably took its name from the river — the old form was 'Invernarne', which is thought to derive from the Gaelic meaning 'mouth of the water of alders', and there are many alder trees growing along the river's banks to this day.

Although Stone Age camp sites have been discovered on the nearby cliff-tops above the raised beach, surprisingly little is known of the very ancient history of Nairn. However, it is almost certain that it was a settlement during the Viking occupation of this region about 1000 A.D. When the early Christian missionaries converted the Pictish population, there was a chapel near the town dedicated to St Ninian, who later became Nairn's patron saint. The original Royal Charter has disappeared but the present one was granted to the town by James VI in 1589 and states therein that it is a confirmation of an earlier Charter granted by Alexander I (1107-1124 A.D.). About the end of the 12th century, William the Lion built a castle on a site lying between the river and the present town centre but, unfortunately, no trace of this old fort exists today.

In the following centuries Nairn played its part in Scotland's history and in a battle at Auldearn, two miles east of the royal burgh, the renowned Marquis of Montrose gained one of his most famous victories (in 1645). Then, in September, 1745, during the Jacobite Rebellion, Sir John Cope's army camped at Nairn on the way to their defeat at Prestonpans. Six months later Cumberland's forces rested at Nairn's outskirts before the great battle which sealed the Jacobites' fate at nearby Culloden Moor.

The development of present-day Nairn began with the introduction of the railway line from Inverness in 1855 and its later continuation to the south. About the same time the harbour piers were also constructed, Fishertown began to take shape and the town then supported a large fishing fleet. Although this industry has dwindled to a great extent in recent years, the influence of the once-strong fishing community is still in evidence and the harbour is now a favourite venue for holiday yachtsmen. Incidentally, the Fishertown Museum has on view many relics of Nairn's past, particularly those connected with the fishing industry, while there is a museum of an entirely different character at Viewfield. Both these museums are well worth a visit!

The area surrounding the burgh is, of course, very rich in ancient history and interested visitors have practically no distance to go to see some fascinating castles, battlefields, ancient burial-grounds, etc.

Without doubt, the main industry of the burgh of Nairn nowadays is tourism and this has been developed so successfully that the town is certainly one of the finest holiday resorts in the North of Scotland. Accommodation, which is plentiful and well organised, includes three large caravan sites, many excellent hotels and even more guest houses, while the shops and restaurants here are all geared to deal with visitors' requirements.

The holidaymaker can enjoy a very wide choice of sports and entertainments in Nairn — these include first-class golf (two 18-hole and one 9-hole courses), fishing in the river, sea angling, tennis, bowls, sailing and bathing, so there is something for everyone here! Indoor and even winter entertainments are also available in the town or at nearby Speyside. Special events during the summer such as Gala Weeks, Golf Weeks, tennis and bowling tournaments, etc., are mentioned in the advertisement below and in our 'Diary of Events' at the end of this magazine, and these are all magnificent attractions to visitors. All in all, Nairn, with its lovely dry climate and friendly population — as well as the other facets already mentioned — is an ideal holiday resort and, once visited, you will wish to return here again and again.

NAIRN

THE HIGHLAND DISTRICT FOR EVERY SEASON

Set on the Southern shore of the Inner Moray Firth and sheltered by mountains to South and West, Nairn enjoys a dry, sunny climate, a sparkling clear atmosphere, long lingering summer days and glorious sunsets.

Nairn is a friendly residential town with good shops, a wide range of fine hotels, guest houses and caravan sites. There are safe sandy beaches on either side of the harbour which is busy with all kinds of leisure sailing boats in summer.

There are two 18- and one 9-hole golf courses of excellent standard and visitors are welcomed. During the Golf Week in May golfing tuition is given by visiting professionals and many enjoyable golfing and social events take place.

Tennis and Bowling facilities are excellent and well-supported Annual Open Tournaments are held in July. The Farmers' Show and Highland Games — both popular events, held for over a hundred years — take place in August.

Easily reached by road, rail and air, Nairn is a splendid place for a relaxing holiday in Summer, Spring and Autumn. Winters are usually mild. Only sixteen miles from Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, tourists can, in a day, visit a wide variety of places, including Moray and Elgin to the East and Loch Ness, Glen Affric, Beauly and the Black Isle.

For Guide Books and further information contact **Chief Executive, Nairn District Council, 4 Court House Lane, Nairn (Telephone Nairn 52056).**

Whatever your needs when on holiday in the county — whether it be drapery, ironmongery, groceries, wines and spirits, footwear, souvenirs or a new "hair-do" — the shops and stores featured here will be delighted to meet your requirements.

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A FRIENDLY WELCOME AND FINE FACILITIES AT BEAUTIFUL SITES

by Geoffrey N. Wright

MORAY AND NAIRN together comprise one of the most attractive areas of Northern Scotland. Lying to the north-east of the busy highway to the north (the A.9), they are usually missed by the visitor seeking the grandeur of the Highlands, yet Moray can claim the eastern edges of the great Cairngorm range, and the two counties are rich in history, diverse in their scenery, and offer an impressive range of varied delights, not least of which are the excellent facilities for campers and caravanners.

Administratively, they have different allegiances — Moray comes under the Grampian Region, while Nairn is in the Highland Region — but both authorities are aware of the tourist potential of their areas and many towns have helpful tourist information centres. A glance at the map at the front of this Guide shows how Grantown-on-Spey is really the hinge round which the usual approaches to the Moray coast revolve. This is easily reached from the A.9 by taking the A.95 a few miles beyond Aviemore and following the Spey valley north-eastwards. Grantown itself is a very attractive, planned town with good shops, river fishing, amid beautiful surrounding countryside. It also has an excellent municipal caravan and camp site on the northern edge of the town, with first-class amenities and marvellous views across Speyside to the Cairngorms.

The A.95 continues down Strathspey to Charlestown of Aberlour, where a small municipal site is not signposted but can be found by turning off the main street near the church, along Elchies Road and across the railway line. This is a quiet, secluded, riverside site adjoining a playing-field, with adequate toilet facilities. Only two miles away, at Craigellachie, is Telford's famous and most beautiful Scottish bridge, built in 1814 at a cost of £8,400, with its roadway (now for pedestrians only) gracefully suspended between two small castellated towers.

Four miles down the A.941 lies Dufftown, an attractive planned town of 1817, and famous for its distilleries, including one of the oldest in Scotland, The Glenlivet. This takes its name from the wooded glen which curves its way down from Tomintoul, the highest village in the Highlands, and just within Moray. Tomintoul is another gateway to the District, reached by the A.93 from Perth to Braemar and Ballater, and then the hilly, wild A.939. Here there is a small caravan and camp site just off the main street, at Campbell's Garage, while another very secluded, crofter's type of site is 'The Croft,' on the Grantown road, four miles to the west, and just beyond the county boundary.

Back at Charlestown, the A.95 continues north-east to Keith and Banff. At Keith, a busy little town with a population of around 4,000, there is one of the numerous sites operated by the Moray District Council — most of them are sited at coastal resorts. This, however, on the southern edge of Keith, off the Dunnyduff Road, although near to modern

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housing estates, is undoubtedly one of the best small caravan and camp sites we have stayed at. Beautifully kept, with excellent amenities, it is quiet, sheltered, and a splendid centre from which to explore much of Moray. Around Keith is undulating countryside, richly farmed, well-wooded, yet always with a feeling of spaciousness. Good roads link towns and villages and put the Moray coast within half-an-hour's drive.

The A.95 for a short way, and then the B.9018 will soon get you to Cullen, a small and picturesque fishing town, where the District Council site occupies a rather exposed position but is on good level ground and has the usual facilities. Nearby, the municipal site at Portknockie is in McLeod Park, on the edge of a housing estate, with good access, is very well-grassed, has a good toilet block and a mobile shop available.

Heading west along the Moray coast the next little village is Findochty, which has a small, sheltered site close to the shore and the rocky cliffs and coves at the western end of the village. The coast road passes Strathlene Caravan Site, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Buckie, with good access to plenty of level pitches, good amenities on this municipal site, shelter from the landward side, but, with the sea only a hundred yards away, you don't want a stiff north-easter during your stay! Buckie itself, with a population of well over 7,000, has the facilities of a fair-sized town and possesses the finest harbour on the Moray Firth coast, making it a busily important white fishing port.

The A.98 soon leads to Fochabers, where it joins A.96 from Keith, and it is this A.96 which is the main spine road running east-west through most of Moray and Nairn, never more than five miles from the coastline. Fochabers is a planned town of late Georgian times, its main street widening at the middle to form a tree-lined square. On the eastern edge, by Fochabers Burn, is the very popular Burnside Caravan Park, with good access, level pitches, first-rate facilities including a covered swimming-pool, a well-stocked shop, and an ideally sheltered position.

Elgin is Moray's county town, a historic city with fine buildings and excellent shops, and is an increasingly important tourist, administrative and trading centre on the main Inverness-Aberdeen road. A mile to the west of Elgin, the Riverside Caravan Park offers a full range of good facilities, including fishing nearby. On the coast to the north lies Lossiemouth, one of Scotland's best-known fishing-ports, which has a municipal site extending over ten acres of sand dunes, with stony but level ground making it better for caravanners than campers, and it has good facilities. At nearby Branderburgh the Silver Sands Holiday Park, though smaller, provides more shelter and a licensed club. But be warned! The R.A.F. Station at Lossiemouth is just across the road, operating as a training base, so there is inevitably a lot of noise from aircraft taking off and landing.

Seven miles west along the coast, Burghead is another little port and resort, with its municipal site having many static caravans, but still leaving plenty of space for touring caravans and tents. It offers good toilet facilities and some sheltered pitches, although the best of these are close to a railway terminus for freight. Midway between Elgin and Forres, and only a mile from the A.96, the North Alves Caravan Park provides a more rural setting, yet is still handy for the coast. Covering seven acres and very well-screened by trees, it gained a Civic Trust commendation in 1971, and its fine amenities include TV and recreation rooms, licensed shop, and children's play-area.

The Royal Burgh of Forres, though much smaller than Elgin, is a town full of character and good buildings, with fine shops and nearby walks. The strangely impressive Sueno's Stone, at the eastern approach to the town, is a survivor from Pictish times, a reminder of the long past of some of these Moray places. At the other end, by the Findhorn River, Mundole Farm is a large caravan site with many static vans but, if a coastal situation is preferred, the Findhorn Bay Caravan Site, five miles north of Forres, also offers good amenities including a launderette and a small theatre. At Kinloss, between Forres and Findhorn, there is another small

An aerial view of Buckie Harbour. This is one of the busiest fishing ports on the Moray Firth and is a popular centre with visiting sailors.

caravan site which has facilities for horse-riding and pony trekking. At Brodie, between Forres and Nairn on the main A.9 road, the Old Mill Inn provides a small, sheltered, caravan site with very good amenities.

Nairn has long had a high reputation as a first-class holiday resort on the Moray Firth, its attractions including two sandy beaches, some good golf courses and a range of other tourist amenities. Close to its busy harbour, colourful with yachts, the East Beach Caravan Park has an open situation on sand dunes, and its good facilities and situation make it understandably popular with caravanners and campers. Just out of Nairn, on the Grantown road (A.939), Balnakeith Caravan Park is much smaller, also has a quota of static vans, but keeps spaces for touring caravans and tents. It is well-sheltered, on level ground, and has a modern toilet block.

Inverness is only 15 miles from Nairn by the main road, but an attractive alternative route, running more inland, will allow you to visit two of the most historic sites in Scotland — Cawdor Castle and Culloden Moor are not far from each other but both are worth a visit. The Caravan Club has its own small, well-kept site, for members only, not far from Culloden.

Our own fine experiences over the past few years have convinced us that Moray and Nairn have a great deal to offer the caravanner and camper, and a good choice of sites on the coast or in the countryside will make him feel most welcome. Good roads, with not too much traffic, except for the main spine route, will encourage him to explore the valleys, hills and woodlands, as well as the fascinating coast, and to enjoy scenic variety leavened with historic buildings.

1978 DIARY OF EVENTS

Further information on these and other local events of interest to visitors may be obtained from the following Tourist Information Centres : Elgin (Plainstones, High Street), Tel. 3388; Dufftown (The Square), Tel. 501; Cullen (Seafield Street), Tel. 40757; Forres (Town Hall, High Street), Tel. 2278; Grantown-on-Spey (The Square), Tel. 2773; Nairn (Bus Station, King Street), Tel. 52753.

May, June and July (Sundays) — GREYFRIARS HOUSE, Elgin. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme). Also by Appointment. Tel. Elgin 2775.

May 6 — Open Golf Tournament at Buckpool.

May 7 — Open Golf Tournament at Cullen.

May 8 - 14 — Nairn Golf Week.

May 25 — ALTYRE, Forres. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme).

May 25 - September 17 — CAWDOR CASTLE, Nairn. Open to Public Daily.

May 28 — Mixed Foursomes Golf Competition at Elgin.

May 29 - September 2 — KINCORTH, Forres. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme).

June 17 — Archieston Village Fete.

June 18 — GORDONSTOUN SCHOOL, Duffus. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme).

July 2 — BRACKLA HOUSE, Cawdor. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme).

July 8 — Open Golf Competition at Forres.

THURSO GALA WEEK
(Caithness)
JULY 15 to 22
Entertainment for All Ages.

July 15 — Tomintoul Highland Games.

July 18 - 21 — Elgin 4-Day Open Golf Tournament.

Sutherland Agricultural Society
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SATURDAY, JULY 22
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July 18-21.

July 22 — Open Golf Competition at Cullen.

Caithness Agricultural Society
ANNUAL SHOW
at RIVERSIDE, WESTERSEAT, WICK
WEDNESDAY, JULY 26

July 23 - 28 — Dufftown Gala Week.

DURNESS HIGHLAND GATHERING
SHORE PARK, DURNESS, SUTHERLAND
FRIDAY, JULY 28
Commencing 12 noon prompt.
USUAL FIELD, TRACK AND HEAVY EVENTS —
DANCE.

July 29 — Dufftown Highland Games.

GOLSPIE GALA WEEK
(SUTHERLAND)
JULY 30 to AUGUST 5
Daily Events for All Ages

August 1 - 4 — Forres 4-Day Open Golf Tournament.

August 2 — Nairn Agricultural Show.

August 2 - 5 — Buckpool 4-Day Open Golf Tournament.

BLACK ISLE SHOW
at MANNSFIELD
MUIR-OF-ORD, ROSS-SHIRE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 3

August 7 and 8 — Keith Annual Show.

August 9 - 12 — Cullen 4-Day Open Golf Tournament.

August 10 — Strathspey Farmers' Show at Grantown-on-Spey.

LAIRG GALA SHOW WEEK
(Sutherland)
AUGUST 12 to 18

August 19 — Nairn Highland Games.

August 27 — GLENFERNESS HOUSE. Gardens Open to Public. (Scotland's Gardens Scheme).

August 31 — Grantown and Strathspey Flower Show.

BEN NEVIS RACE
Britain's Premier Hill Race
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2
at 2.30 p.m.
From the New Town Park to the top of Ben Nevis and back.

September 3 — Caird Cup Golf Tournament at Elgin.

September 9 - 10 — Open One Round Golf Competitions at Cullen.

CAWDOR

600 Years of Highland History

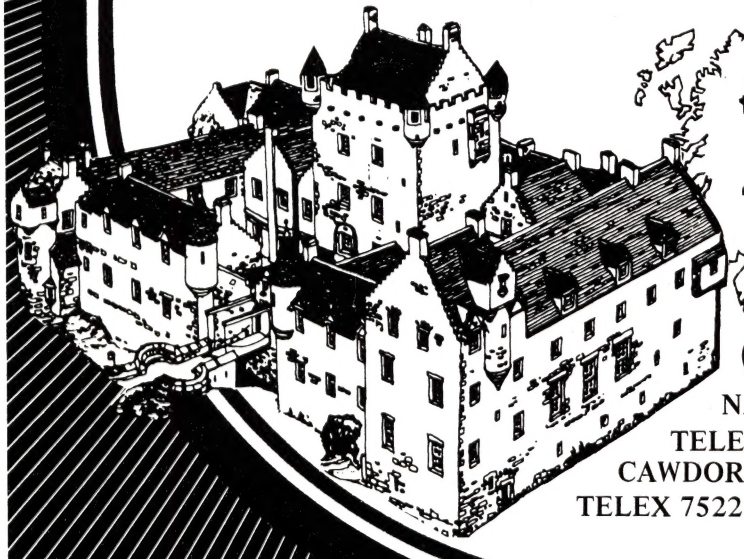
Castle Cawdor has been the home of the Thanes of Cawdor since the early 14th Century. This still-daunting fortress home of the present Earl of Cawdor, with its drawbridge, its ancient tower built around a tree and its freshwater well inside the house, is a glorious reminder of Scotland's colourful and often bloody history.

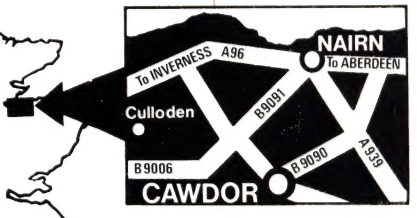
Yet the beautifully laid out gardens and sweeping lawns, the hedges, flowers and trees provide a peacefully contrasting setting to the fortified castle walls, wherein, according to Shakespeare, King Duncan was foully murdered by the infamous Macbeth.

A MAGICAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

There's more to Cawdor than just its past. Two nature trails, colourful gardens, pitch and putt course, picnic area, snack bar, licensed restaurant and Gift Shop make it a great place to spend a day.

- **Free Parking**
- **Open from 10am–5.30pm daily from 25 May to 17 September 1978**
- **Situated between Inverness and Nairn on the B9090**

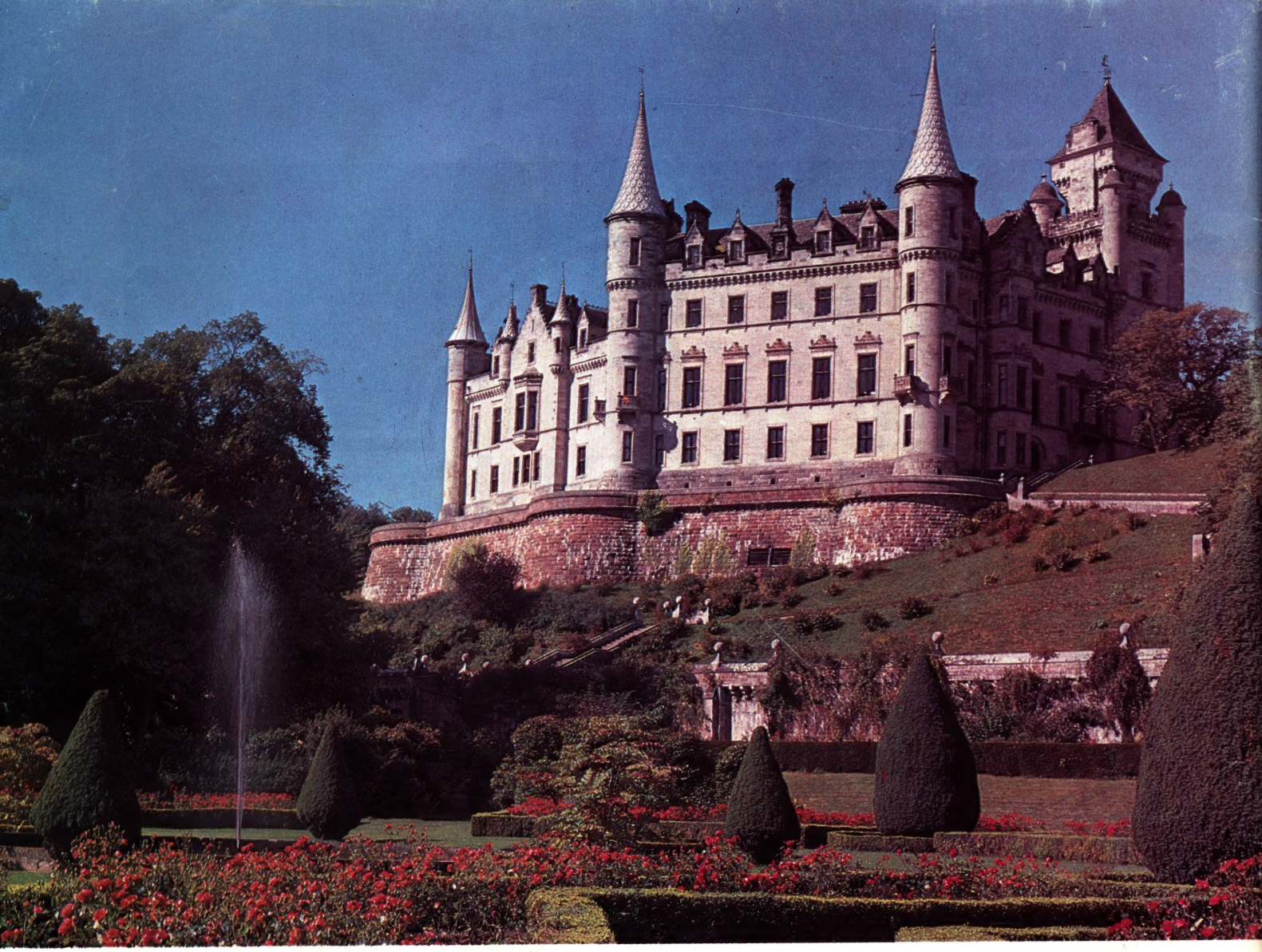




CAWDOR

NAIRN. SCOTLAND.

TELEPHONE
CAWDOR 615
TELEX 75225



VISIT
Dunrobin Castle & Gardens
ancient seat of the Earls and Dukes of Sutherland

Wherever you are staying in the Highlands, you will find a special visit to Dunrobin well worth the journey. Much of the interior, containing a wide variety of furniture, paintings and exhibits, is open to the public and the magnificent gardens are there to be walked in and enjoyed by visitors at their complete leisure. Within the castle grounds is a museum with many unique exhibits of both local and general interest. Light refreshments are available in the castle where there is also a souvenir and craft shop.

OPEN FROM 1st MAY TO 31st OCTOBER (Castle until 30th September)
MONDAY TO SATURDAY 10.30 am to 5.30 pm SUNDAY 1 pm to 6 pm

Dunrobin Castle

GOLSPIE, SUTHERLAND

(Just north of Golspie on the main A9)

ENQUIRIES: Telephone Golspie (04083) 377